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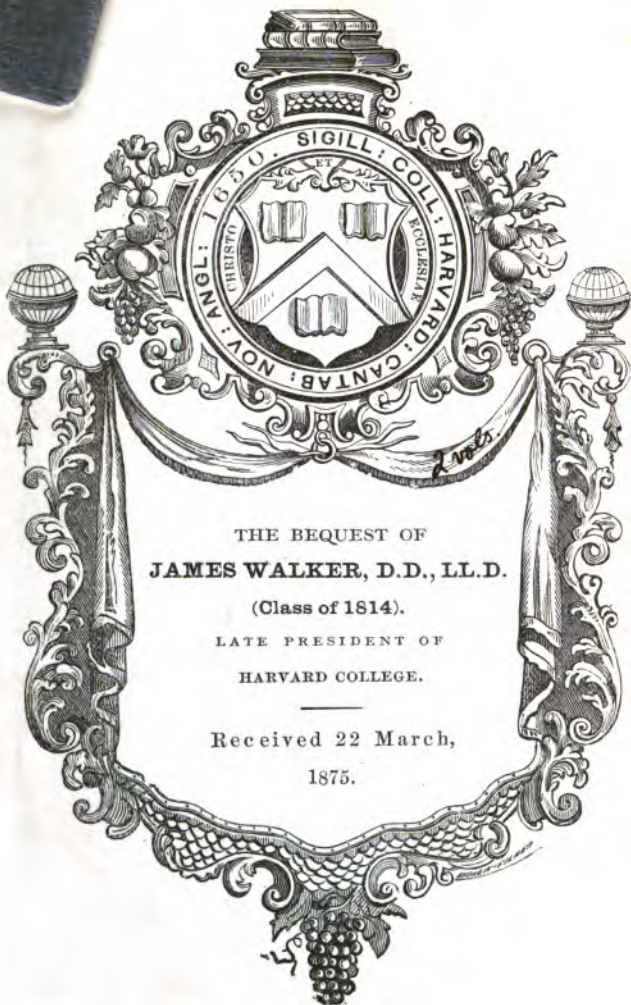
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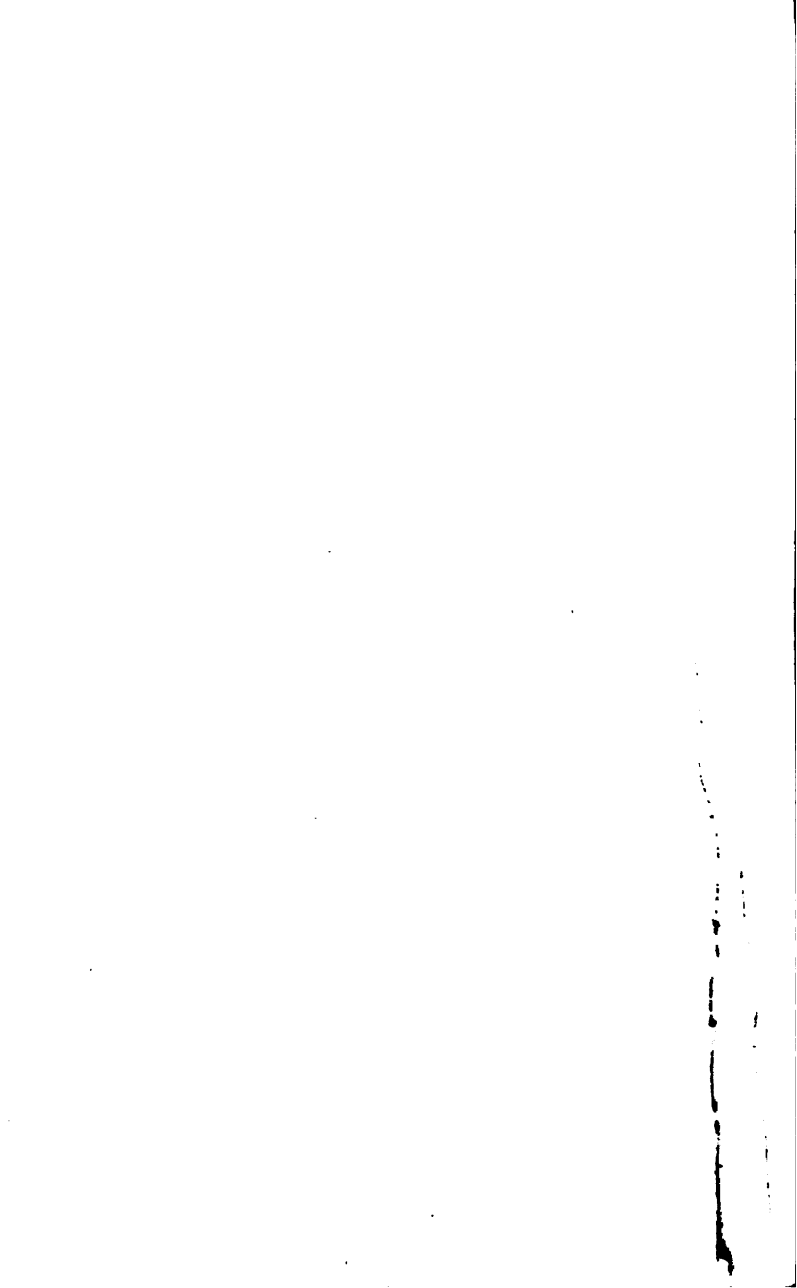




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ANTTIQVITATES APOSTOLICAE

OR, THE  
LIVES, ACTS, AND MARTYRDOMS  
OF THE

# HOLY APOSTLES

OF OUR

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BY

WILLIAM CAVE, D.D.

CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

VOL. I.

WITH

A **N** INTRODUCTORY ESSAY,

BY THE

REV. HENRY STEBBING, M.A.

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## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

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THERE are certain eras in the history of mankind which require to be contemplated by many and various lights. This is especially the case with those which have derived their importance from giving birth to new moral systems, or from bringing into more conspicuous action the spiritual energies of our race. Political revolutions naturally form remarkable points in the annals of nations, because attended with events to which the tenacity of human sympathy would of itself give a durable importance: but in those changes which have reached the souls of men, a power is found to be at work, the dimmest discovery of which never fails to act with an elevating force on the mind of the discoverer. It is a noble property of the human conscience to be able to recognize the Almighty in creation; but this is so generally the endowment of man, that he is expected, even in his lowest condition, to act according to the light he may thence derive; whereas to behold God in the secret workings of his providence, in the preparations and dispensings of his Spirit, is in the power only of



those whom he has singularly favoured with wisdom and the love of meditation. But in many of those events which compose the bulk of history, he effects his designs by the operation of agents which seem to partake almost as little of his living spirit as the matter which composes the machinery of the universe : and thus, in the study of history, a large portion of it may be read without demanding or eliciting any extraordinary proof of mental vigour ; while, on the other hand, every passage which describes the new position into which mankind is put, by an enlargement of light and knowledge, demands, and when fairly contemplated, produces another and a higher state of mind. While however this is the fruit of that nobler class of historical truths, they also require a more copious illustration than others, to be brought within the scope and operation of our understanding. The higher we ascend in the regions of speculation, the firmer should be our supports ; a rule the neglect of which has exemplified almost more than anything else, the pride and folly of human reason ; for, however otherwise it may appear to superficial minds, it is mainly owing to our negligence or indifference that there is not found in the very loftiest ranges of human thought, in those which it is supposed by the world exist only for wild hypotheses, firm footing for reason, and bright and visible temples of truth,—islands and

continents lying beyond the vast ocean of uncertainty, which are not the less real because but rarely visited, nor the less beautiful because their starry galaxies have not yet been submitted to our calculations. The same remark holds good also in respect to the less speculative part of such inquiries. There is both a greater degree of evidence required, and a greater degree given, for unfolding the moral truths of history ; and where this is properly taken advantage of—when the mind, intent on the object of inquiry, gathers around it whatever can emit even the smallest ray of light, and history is examined as a body instinct with spirits which have their immortality within it, and will come forth and manifest themselves at the call of thought rightly spending its preparatory vigils ; then the most important eras of our existence, those in which we have been perceptibly carried towards the great beacon-light of humanity, will enable us to observe those changes in their origin which have had the most beneficial influence on our state and nature, and to converse with the just men who, now made perfect, had then to struggle with temptations and difficulties like our own.

But glancing over the wide circle of human history, with the distinct purpose of discovering the periods at which mankind were most forcibly appealed to, and influenced, in their spiritual capacity, it is impossible for us not to find our attention at


once arrested by the singular splendour which marks the birth and growth of Christianity. If we may find a type in creation, of that second great demonstration of divine love, we see the light which at first existed only in its own limitless fountains, and but a few scintillations of which before shone upon the world, then poured into a glorious orb to shed constant beauty and fertility over the universe; for the slightest examination of history shows, that what was before but uncertainly known in morals, thenceforward became fixed in principles; and that the truths which had been made palatable by their mixture with error, then became sufficiently attractive of themselves to secure the attention of the world. In the subsequent conflicts between truth and error, a change is perceptible both in the modes of attack and defence, and in the instruments employed for carrying on the struggle. Error dared not deny the unity of God—truth feared not to assert it as the foundation of all holiness: instead of marshalling the shadowy ranks of mythological powers, and looking for the soul of a deity under each broad shield of the abstract virtues, error itself acknowledged the pure and mighty attributes of Jehovah, only venturing to speak of the variety of his decrees; and truth, instead of appealing to tradition, or the innate notions of the soul, referred at once to rules which had received the sanction of Eternity.

True it is, that the soil was not uniformly impregnated with the divine fire which glowed in Christianity; but the external change was sufficiently great and general to show that the world confessed the action of a new element; and from the commencement of its operation to the present hour, the effects have been evidently on the increase.

The examination of an era like this is equally interesting and important. It is one of the plainest duties of the intellectual and spiritual to do whatever lies in their power to bring it as distinctly as may be within the general range of men's understandings and sympathies. This has been allowed in every age of the Christian church; and its greatest ornaments have gladly employed their learning and their power of logical inquiry in this sacred labour. They have considered that while the Scriptures are the sole original of doctrine; while they alone are to be appealed to when we would correct error, heal schism, rebuke self-will, or do aught which belongs to the establishing of the faith, there are many sources, both of information and instruction, which, properly opened, may be made to pour copious streams of knowledge into the bosom of the Christian community. And to this conclusion they have been guided by the diversified character of Scripture itself; which while it contains the fulness of doctrine, contains the elements of much beside, which is to be wrought out by the

industry of the human mind; or which, being sufficient for the immediate purpose in view, is to content the uninquisitive, but form to others the foundation of farther and more general inquiry. This is the case with many of those points which it was not consistent with the intentions of Christ to direct his messengers to teach as main parts of their doctrine; but which, nevertheless, as being in themselves true, could not fail to be involved in the rest, and are to be traced out by the laborious and spiritual watchfulness of true biblical students. An example of this is afforded us in the little stated, in direct terms, respecting the future condition of the redeemed, and the still less of the separate state of the soul: but by a diligent comparison of the passages which bear remotely on these subjects, by a careful treasuring up of all the overflowings of light from the main vessels of doctrine, the mind is rewarded with a far nearer approach to the knowledge of these hidden things than the cursory reader can suspect.

And while this is the case with respect to doctrine, it is also especially so in regard to the historical development of the gospel birth-time. The circumstances recorded are separated widely from each other by matter of deeper importance, in the main, than the facts themselves. Thus attention is perpetually drawn from the incidents of the history to the doctrines of the system, and this more



than is the case with any other narrative in existence; if we except, perhaps, some few passages of national history, which describe the rise or establishment of fundamental laws. Hence arises the necessity for especial care in the study of evangelical history, which has, indeed, an importance in relation to doctrine itself not always duly estimated; for, not to mention that which is obvious to all, its support of the doctrine, or its illustration of doctrine, it is the soil out of which the seed of eternal truth and life first sprung, embodied in visible forms: the gospel being the incarnation of truth, and the history which it delivers, the development of that new Being thus, as it were, born into the world.

On examining the several books of the New Testament, with a view to the discovery of the characters of the several actors in the events it describes, it is found that a far more distinct portraiture can be drawn of those we are most anxious to contemplate than would otherwise be imagined. Christ himself stands revealed in all the fulness of celestial purity and goodness to the eye of patient meditation: but it is not by his words taken singly, nor by the separate consideration of particular miracles; it is by bringing them together; by passing with him from the crowded shores of Jordan to the solitary wilderness; and from the wilderness to the populous towns and villages of Galilee; by

accompanying him in spirit through his trials and his triumphs; bringing them, as near as may be, within the focus of a single glance of faith, that the character of Christ, that Christ himself, is known in the manner described by the evangelist John; that is, so as to be seen and handled as the word of life. The same, in a lower sense, is true of his chief apostles. St. Peter, for example, had a character distinctly marked by several peculiarities of mind and temper; but it is only on one or two main facts of his history that the ordinary reader of the gospel fixes his attention; and the other circumstances respecting him being neglected, his zeal and his fall, the two extreme points, are so brought together as to destroy the possibility of presenting him to the mind in the proper proportions of human character. On taking, however, into consideration the ordinary account given of his countrymen, the Galileans, described as naturally fierce, bold, and impatient of contradiction; adding to this, a due weighing of the circumstances attending the life of a fisherman, exposed to many perils, often called to reflection by the startling phenomena of the deep: then passing to the view of the incidents which occurred after his call; his apparent attachment to home; his eagerness to avail himself of his privileges as a disciple of Christ; the ready surrender which he made of his mind to the doctrines of his master; his

astonishment on Tabor; his weariness in Gethsemane; his terror in the judgment-hall, will be seen in their natural bearings and relations. To these particulars may be added, the incidents recorded of him after the gift of the Holy Spirit, of which sufficient are related to place him distinctly before us, and to show that the ground-work of his personal character still retained its strong, original peculiarities. Then, leaving the narrative, we may turn to his epistles, which cement and admirably illustrate whatever is found written of him in the Scripture history. Glowing with all the fervour natural to his soul, deeply imbued with the associations of his venerable faith in the prophets, and elevated by intimate acquaintance with the sublimest mysteries of spiritual religion, we hear him speaking the language which might be looked for from one who had not only been on the mount of transfiguration, but had proclaimed the divinity of Christ, and had received gifts of knowledge proportionable to his faith. But there is a striking feature in these epistles biographically considered; they abound in maxims remarkable for sedateness and cautiousness of spirit: they exhort to duties which only the most self-subdued heart can understand; and the quick, impetuous Peter is heard admonishing with a mildness and serenity of argument which might only have been looked for from the most gentle of human spirits. Light is thus thrown



upon the disposition of Peter, and upon the state of his mind when he had passed the greatest portion of his career as a preacher of the gospel; and we are hereby enabled to contemplate his completed character. In doing this, we find it retaining all the elements which gave it a degree of rude grandeur even at the commencement of his course; which made us feel, when he first pronounced his most sublime confession, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of God!' and when he dared to attempt a pathway over an angry sea, because it led to his Lord, that a man had risen before us destined for great purposes: we find him neither less ardent nor less courageous; neither less affectionate nor less susceptible; but these, his original characteristics, are all nobly blended with the loftier attributes of an apostle confirmed in the faith, filled with the wisdom of experience, and grown familiar with the great Spirit of Truth, by long and intimate communion with him in every scene and circumstance of life.

On looking again at the account given of St. Paul, though we find the circumstances related of his ministry more numerous, and set forth in a more distinct order, they plainly require to be brought together by great care, and with all the succinctness which the energy of inquiry can give them, before the apostle of the Gentiles will be seen in the true light which history, properly employed,

may render. In this case, the great effort required is to bring the brief but important narrative of his labours into immediate connexion with his own compositions; a point which may be reached with little or no difficulty so far as the mechanical or formal arrangement is concerned; but to effect which, so as to make them mutually illustrate each other, is a work of skill, and the reward of thoughtfulness. The history given by St. Luke is close and rapid; but we learn from it sufficient to understand the early zealotry, the deep enthusiasm, the strength of Paul's character, which confirmed him in his early principles against every appeal short of the strongest demonstrations of the will of God. Striking, however, as might be the portrait drawn of this wonderful man, had we only his history as recorded in the Acts, that which is most admirable in his character would be but weakly exhibited through this unassisted medium. It is in his epistles, and that in many passages which an inattentive reader would pass over, without discovering either their historical or spiritual force, that the peculiarities, the bright and glorious individuality of St. Paul is to be found displayed. Whatever is said by critics of those marvellous idioms of true poetry which penetrate the mysteries of our nature, and are so precious as indications of large classes of truths, may be said of numerous incidental expressions and allusions in the writings of this apostle; and

by observing these, we arrive at a knowledge not only of his labours, of his energy and perseverance, but of his intellectual being, as wrought upon, and possessed by the Spirit of holiness whom he, on the other hand, (and in this consisted the great mystery of his renewed nature,) sought to possess. "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that *I may apprehend* that for which also *I am apprehended.*" A sentiment embodying the highest doctrine of evangelical righteousness, and made palpable to the understanding of every man by this deeply pathetic confession of the apostle.

Scripture history, when thus studied, affords more distinct portraits of the characters it mentions than many of the most celebrated of secular narratives; but it is to be regretted, that in the general reading of the divine records, that which is historical is not less neglected than what is purely doctrinal or monitory; and thus the conception of those characters which the Scriptures set forth in the two-fold light of chosen agents in the great works of Providence, and examples to the universal race of man, is too indefinite either to move the heart, or to fill up the space they are intended to occupy in the argument of faith. It was the consideration of these circumstances which first led to the composition of lives of the Saviour and his immediate followers, founded on the relations of

Scripture, but intended to present the principal facts and minute particulars, which lie widely dispersed through the books of Revelation, in a condensed and consecutive order. In undertaking this task, however, even the most careful of writers would naturally inquire, whether there were not other sources of information which might be safely employed to furnish the means of minuter description than those which ought to be looked for in a record of revelations and doctrines, rather than of events. Clear and impressive as were the forms which rose before the contemplative eye of the spiritualized student, it could not be denied that the bolder the hand seemed by which the outline was drawn, the deeper the tints which filled it up, the more attractive and satisfactory would the whole be likely to prove to the ordinary reader. Hence sprang the mingled necessity and temptation which gave such value to the traditions which arose, like a thick mist, sometimes from the natural heat of the current of events, at others from its impurity and stagnation. In both cases the use made of them necessarily depended on the honesty and the skill of those who employed them in illustration or continuation of the Scripture narrative. But, unfortunately, the credulity of some, and the artifice of others, speedily brought the use of traditionary remains into disrepute; and it soon became a question with those whose stern worship

of truth prevented their discriminating between them, whether the traditionary was not the same as the fabulous.

This is a question of immense importance in the history of our religion; and it need scarcely be mentioned, that some of the bitterest controversies in which different divisions of Christians have been engaged, derived much of their rancour from the doubts attending this subject. But so far as the biography of the eminent founders of our religion is concerned, the question admits of limitations which bring it within the possibility of solution. It is not to establish disputed points of doctrine that we desire to see these chosen and, without a metaphor, heaven-born men as they lived and acted; but to be soothed, elevated, and encouraged in our struggles by their example. The appeal to tradition, therefore, for biographical purposes, has none of the suspicion which attends it when employed to serve any partial design; and to this consideration, which removes one very material class of objections to its employment, we may add another which enlarges the sphere out of which the writer may, with safety and honesty, draw materials for his purpose; that is to say, there is probability on the side of tradition in respect to its biographical uses; and it can almost always be judged of by the rule of verisimilitude, when limited to this employment. It is an acknowledged fact, that the

writers of the New Testament selected the circumstances they recorded out of a much larger number of incidents than it came within their province to detail: were it not, therefore, a sacred duty to sacrifice every object to the perfect preservation of Scripture from the least mixture with even possible error, it might be argued, that it is not probable, that the striking and powerfully interesting events connected with the establishment of the gospel, could any of them be lost; and that we may therefore look with confidence on many of those traditional relations which purport to be details of occurrences left unnoticed by the inspired penmen.

But the judicious jealousy with which the purity of the gospel is watched, has raised a barrier against the introduction of such auxiliaries to the Scripture narrative. Where this narrative ceases, the case becomes different, and the probability of the tradition remains without any prohibition to its employment. The character of the period immediately succeeding the first founding of the church, was singularly fitted for the production of incidents not sufficiently important to demand a continuance of the sacred and inspired narrative, but in every way calculated to excite and secure attention. When the apostles and first disciples left the original seat of the gospel, to spread its glad tidings over the world, they did not perform

their allotted duties with so little energy as to remain obscure among the people to whom they ministered. Fulfilling the precept of their glorified Master, they became beacons of truth, shining from the eminence on which their election had placed them, over wide regions of gloom and sterility; but not freed from suffering, they were also set forth to men and to angels a spectacle of much and patient endurance. In both these respects the apostles could not fail of being scrutinized by large classes of observers, who moved by their doctrines, startled by their miracles, or enraged by their severe rebukes, would not easily forget their addresses, or lose sight of the circumstances which attended their appeals. The personal appearance, the voice and gesture even of such men, would long have a permanent place in the memory; and many a saying, many a minute action that had sunk deep into the hearts of retired, devout converts, would, when the spirit became accustomed to the new and overpowering thoughts which the gospel message had awakened, come back upon the mind with a long, fresh train of impressive associations.

It may fairly be concluded from these considerations, that for some time after the apostles lived, the memory of Christians was richly stored with particulars respecting them: that these particulars would form the subject of frequent conversation among believers: that they would be communi-

cated from one division of the church to another, by the interchange of letters, and the journeyings of ministers and missionaries, is equally probable; and to suppose that this species of information could be quickly lost, or that it could become so thoroughly corrupted by the intermixture of fable as to be unworthy of notice in a subsequent age, is to do violence to the rules on which all evidence must rest, which is in any way transmitted through channels not sealed and guarded by formal testaments.

We would gather from this, that a biographer of the apostles, and their first successors, has a wide field open to him which he may traverse with safety and profit; but at the same time imposing on him this strict and uniformly applicable rule, that that species of traditional information only is to be made use of, which is found adopted by those who lived at a period sufficiently near the apostolic times to judge of its origin and its authors. Taking this as a primary principle in the selection of incidents, and in every instance examining them by the rule of analogy and verisimilitude, there will be little danger of our adopting any of those weak inventions by which the superstition of former ages was amused and fostered.

Lives of the apostles were written at an early period; but they are for the most part filled with accounts evidently intended to excite the attention



of weak, uninstructed minds, and possessing no claim to belief. The period was favourable to such productions; the excitement occasioned by extraordinary events requiring all those modifying principles which are only found in the purest faith and piety; and creating, consequently, a very wide field for the employment of invention. This is amply shown by the rapid multiplication of writings, purporting to have been of apostolic origin. Even before the end of the first century new gospels had been forged, and the acts of Christ and his apostles were described in books which, claiming reverence by the nature of their contents, were not less calculated to interest than to deceive. Such were the gospel according to the Hebrews, and the gospel according to the Egyptians; both of which furnished sufficient authorities to support very numerous sects in dangerous errors: nor were they altogether deprived of their pretensions to credit, till after the canon of Scripture had been some time settled by diligent and cautious inquiry. Besides these, there were the gospel of St. Peter, the gospel of Philip, the gospel of James, and of every other apostle, not excepting the traitor Judas himself, whose supposed composition is said to have been received by the Gajanites, of whom, strange to relate, he was the titular saint. The acts of the apostles, subsequent to the time of Christ, furnished materials for an equal number of similar supposititious nar-

ratives. It is commonly believed that the first work of this nature was the production of a disciple of St. Paul, and that the writer was detected in his falsehoods by the knowledge of St. John, who still survived. The chief source, however, of fabulous traditions, was that heretical spirit which so early infected the church. Most of the spurious gospels had their origin with the Ebionites, the Manichæans, or some other powerful sect. From the same source proceeded the Acts of the Apostles, which pretended to describe, in particular terms, the labours and journeyings of those devout men to the end of their days.

The whole of these works were rejected by the church; and private Christians were warned against their dangerous errors by the many acute and pious scholars who devoted themselves to the examination of whatever assumed the title of an inspired production. Conferences between the believers of one city and another, and the succession of highly devout and gifted men, as bishops of the several infant establishments, led gradually to the clear and firm determination of the Scripture canon. Numerous synods, held in subsequent ages, reinvestigated with minute particularity the reason upon which this rule was established; and a line was drawn, which the boldness of heresy has never since been able to pass. But while no writer, of common penetration or honesty, would venture

to look for materials in these counterfeit narratives; there is still a source of information open, to which suspicion cannot justly attach. This is found in the writings of those fathers who lived in the first three centuries, to the end of which period much even of the unwritten history of the apostolic age might be carried by a natural and easy tradition. The epistle generally ascribed to Barnabas, though evidently unimportant as to doctrine, deserves to be regarded in a much higher light when consulted simply for historical illustration: the same may be said of the remains of Papias, whose theoretical conceits, though they greatly diminish our confidence in the strength of his capacity, ought certainly not to deprive him of all credit as a witness, when the circumstances he mentions have no intrinsic improbability. To refuse to believe a writer on a matter of fact, because he appears incapable of acutely discerning between truth and error in theoretical or purely intellectual subjects, would be to introduce a rule that would render it impossible, in most cases, to get evidence on any subject whatever. In the fragments of such men as Clemens Romanus, Ignatius, Polycarp, the least glimpses of information are of inestimable value; nor is it to be supposed, when coming to a later period, that writers like Origen, or Cyprian, or Chrysostom, or the historian Eusebius or Theodoret, would not avail themselves of the most credible traditions, or

that before adopting them, they would not fairly examine their claims to belief. That much uncertainty on several points of interest must remain, after every source of information has been investigated, cannot be denied. But this is not to prevent our using the utmost diligence to collect whatever lies within the reach of learning: and it will generally be found, that when the combined caution and sound erudition of Christian scholars are taken as a guide on this subject, that both instruction and satisfaction will follow in the track they have pursued.

To reflecting minds, the biography of Christ's apostles traced out according to these rules, will afford many a refreshing and elevating theme for thought. These messengers of Christ to the world were not teachers merely; they were the foundation-stones of the vast spiritual edifice which Christ and the Holy Spirit will continue to enlarge, till it is commensurate with the predescribed plan of the heavenly Jerusalem: they formed the natural body of the church ere the might of Divine power descended to present it to, and to make it one with Christ; they became, when his prayer was answered, 'sanctify them through thy truth,' the types of Christian believers in all ages and countries of the world; and in their journeyings and sufferings they show how, according to the language of St. Paul, the followers of the Redeemer were to go on, 'fill-

ing up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in the flesh.' And this contemplation of their primary calling and dignity, will conduct the mind to some apprehension of the glory they will be seen enjoying when, as the still supremely exalted, and eldest born brethren of Christ, they will judge, on their thrones, the twelve tribes of Israel.

*Born in  
1637.*

The eminent writer of the following memoirs merits all the confidence due to distinguished worth and ability. His own history may be given in a few lines. He was born <sup>early in</sup> [at the close of] the seventeenth ~~or~~ beginning of the eighteenth century, at Pickwell, in Leicestershire; the living of which parish was held by his father, a man of learning and piety, who bore his full share in the troubles endured by the clergy during the civil wars. Our author received his education at St. John's College, Cambridge; and took the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1656. He proceeded to the degree of Master at the regular period; and in 1662 obtained the vicarage of Islington, and not long after the dignity of Chaplain in Ordinary to Charles the Second. In 1672 he took the degree of D.D., to which he was also admitted at the sister university; and in 1681, his merits as a scholar obtained for him the rectory of Allhallows, and a canonry at Windsor. But the numerous calls which his London preferments made upon him

were found prejudicial to the important labours he had undertaken as an historian of Christianity; and he gladly accepted, in exchange for Islington and Allhallows, the vicarage of Isleworth, to which he retired in the year 1690; and where he continued to enjoy for many years the leisure which he employed so greatly to the advantage of religion and learning. His death took place on the 4th of August, 1713; and he lies buried in the parish church of Islington, where a monument is placed to his memory.

The works of this distinguished scholar are numerous. The chief are, the '*Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Historia Literaria*, or, a Literary History of Ecclesiastical Writers;' his '*Lives of the Apostles*;' the '*Apostolici*, or the History of the Lives, Acts, Deaths, and Martyrdoms of those who were cotemporary with, or immediately succeeded the Apostles, as also of the most eminent of the Primitive Fathers for the first three hundred years;' the '*Primitive Christianity*, or the Religion of the Ancient Christians;' the '*Tabulæ Ecclesiasticæ*, or Tables of the Ecclesiastical Writers;' '*A Dissertation concerning the Government of the Ancient Church*, by Bishops, Metropolitans, and Patriarchs; those particularly concerning the Ancient Power and Jurisdiction of the Bishops of Rome, and the Encroachment of that upon other Sees, especially the See of Constantinople;' '*Ecclesiastici*,

or the History of the Lives, Acts, Deaths, and Writings, of the most eminent Fathers of the Church, that flourished in the Fourth Century: wherein, among other things, an Account is given of the rise, growth, and progress of Arianism, and all other Sects of that Age, descending from it: together with an Introduction, containing an Historical Account of the State of Paganism under the first Christian Emperor: and lastly, the 'Chartophylax Ecclesiasticus,' which is a succinct summary of the principal contents of the *Historia Litteraria*, and an improvement on the Ecclesiastical Tables.

Cave's early estimation as a scholar on the Continent is proved by the reprint of his chief work, the *Historia Litteraria*, at Geneva; and of his *Tabulæ Ecclesiasticæ* at Hamburgh: nor can any student of religious history fail of finding in his works most important helps to investigation. Jortin, a writer more witty than acute, and better skilled to perform the part of a compiler than to reason or investigate, has affected to speak sarcastically of Cave's deep attention to the fathers: but the careful reader well knows how to appreciate the respective merits of these men; and even a cursory glance of the '*Historia Litteraria*' of the one, and of the '*Remarks on Ecclesiastical History*' of the other, will at once show how little pretensions Jortin had to act the part of a critic in regard to this profound scholar.

THE  
LIVES  
OF THE  
HOLY APOSTLES  
OF  
OUR SAVIOUR.





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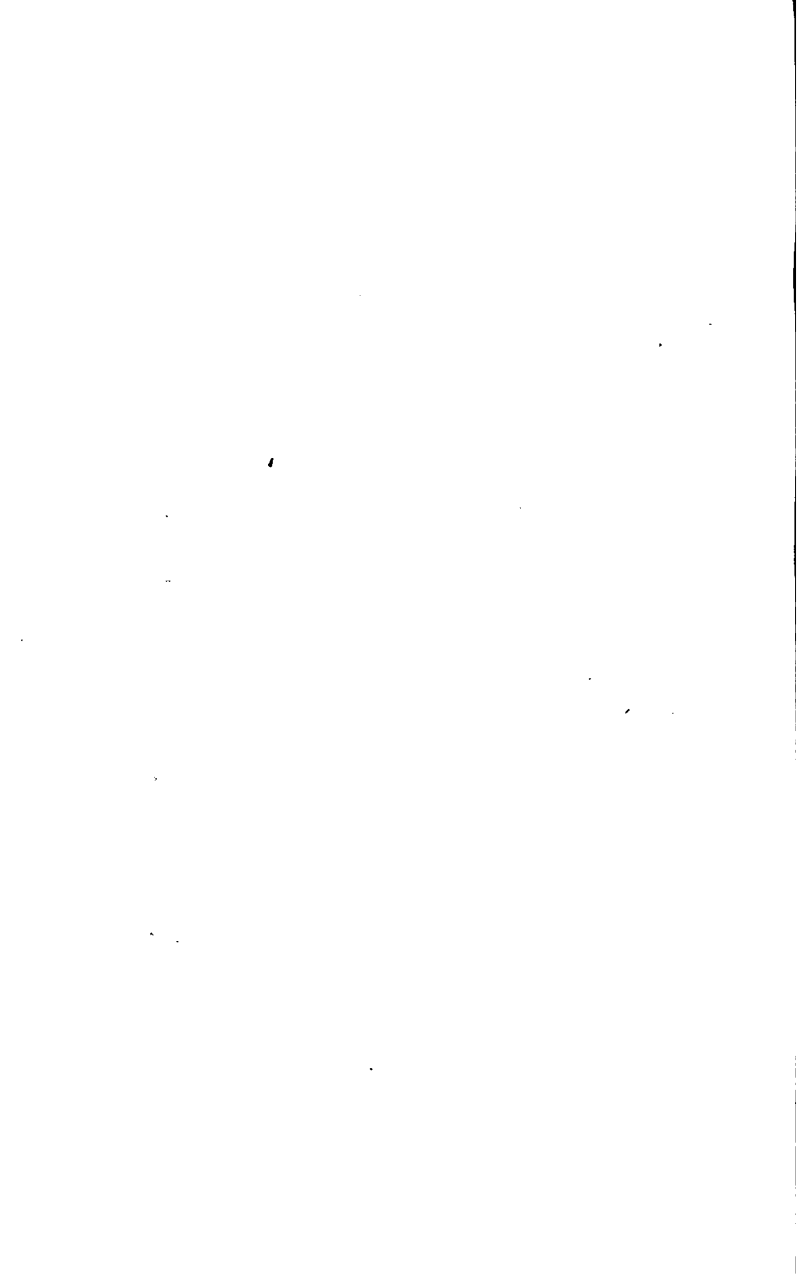
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## AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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IT will not, I suppose, seem improbable to the reader, when I tell him with how much reluctancy and unwillingness I set upon this undertaking. intimately conscious as I was to my own unfitness for such a work at any time, much more when clogged with many habitual infirmities and distempers. I considered the difficulty of the thing itself, perhaps not capable of being well managed by a much better pen than mine; few of the ancient monuments of the church being extant, and little of this nature in those few that are. Indeed, I could not but think it reasonable, that all possible honour should be done to those that first 'preached the gospel of peace, and brought glad tidings of good things;' that it was fit men should be taught how much they were obliged to those excellent persons, who were willing at so dear a rate to plant Christianity in the world; who they were, and what was that piety and that patience, that charity and that zeal, which made them to be revered while they lived, and their memories ever since to be honourably celebrated through the world; infinitely beyond the glories of Alexander, and the triumphs of a Pompey or a Cæsar. But then how

this should be done out of those few imperfect memoirs that have escaped the general shipwreck of church antiquities; and much more by so rude and unskilful a hand as mine, appeared, I confess, a very difficult task, and next door to impossible. These, with some other considerations, made me a long time obstinately resolve against it, till, being overcome by importunity, I yielded to do it as I was able, and as the nature of the thing would bear.

That which I primarily designed to myself, was to draw down the history of the New Testament, especially from our Lord's death; to inquire into the first originals and plantations of the Christian church by the ministry of the apostles, the success of their doctrine, the power and conviction of their miracles, their infinite labours and hardships, and the dreadful sufferings which they underwent; to consider in what instances of piety and virtue they ministered to our imitation, and served the purposes of religion and a holy life. Indeed the accounts that are left us of these things are very short and inconsiderable; sufficient possibly to excite the appetite, not to allay the hunger of an importunate inquirer into these matters. A consideration that might give us just occasion to lament the irreparable loss of those primitive records, which the injury of time hath deprived us of; the substance being gone, and little left us but the shell and carcass. Had we the writings of Papias, bishop of Hierapolis,<sup>1</sup> and scholar (says

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 2. p. 4.

Irenæus) to St. John ; wherein, as himself tells us, he set down what he had learnt from those who had familiarly conversed with the apostles, the sayings and discourses of Andrew and Peter, of Philip and Thomas, &c.; had we the ancient Commentaries of Hegesippus, Clemens Alexandrinus's *Institutions*, Africanus's *Chronography*, and some others, the reader might expect more entire and particular relations. But, alas ! these are long since perished, and little besides the names of them transmitted to us. Nor should we have had most of that little which is left us, had not the commendable care and industry of Eusebius<sup>1</sup> preserved it to us. And if he complained, in his time, (when those writings were extant,) that towards the composing of his history he had only some few particular accounts here and there left by the ancients of their times, what cause have we to complain, when even those little portions have been ravished from us ? So that he that would build a work of this nature, must look upon himself as condemned to a kind of Egyptian task, to make brick without straw, at least to pick it up where he can find it, though after all it amounts to a very slender parcel. Which as it greatly hinders the beauty and completeness of the structure, so does it exceedingly multiply the labour and difficulty. For by this means I have been forced to gather up those little fragments of antiquity, that lie dispersed in the writings of the ancients, thrown some into this corner, and others into that ; which I have at length

1 Apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. i. c. 2, p. 111.



put together, like the pieces of a broken statue, that it might have at least some kind of resemblance of the person whom it designs to represent.

Had I thought good to have traded in idle and frivolous authors, Abdias Babylonius, 'The Passions of Peter and Paul,' Joachim Perionius, Peter de Natalibus, and such like, I might have presented the reader with a larger, not a better account. But besides the averseness of my nature to falsehoods and trifles, especially wherein the honour of the Christian religion is concerned, I knew the world to be wiser at this time of day, than to be imposed upon by pious frauds, and cheated with ecclesiastical romances and legendary reports. For this reason, I have more fully and particularly insisted upon the lives of the two first apostles, so great a part of them being secured by an unquestionable authority; and have presented the larger portions of the sacred history, many times to very minute circumstances of action. And I presume the wise and judicious reader will not blame me, for choosing rather to enlarge upon a story which I knew to be infallibly true, than to treat him with those which there was cause enough to conclude to be certainly false.

The reader will easily discern, that the authors I make use of are not all of the same rank and size. Some of them are divinely inspired, whose authority is sacred, and their reports rendered not only credible, but unquestionable, by that infallible and unerring spirit that presided over them. Others such, of whose faith and testimony, especially in

matters of fact, there is no just cause to doubt ; I mean the genuine writings of the ancient fathers ; or those, which, though unduly assigned to this or that particular father, are yet generally allowed to be ancient, and their credit not to be despised, because their proper parent is not certainly known. Next these come the writers of the middle and later ages of the church, who, though below the former in point of credit, have yet some particular advantages that recommend them to us. Such I account Symeon Metaphrastes, Nicephorus Callistus, the *Menæa* and *Menologies* of the Greek church, &c. wherein, though we meet with many vain and improbable stories, yet may we rationally expect some real and substantial accounts of things ; especially seeing they had the advantage of many ancient and ecclesiastical writings extant in their times, which to us are utterly lost. Though even these too I have never called in, but in the want of more ancient and authentic writers. As for others, if any passages occur either in themselves of doubtful and suspected credit, or borrowed from spurious and uncertain authors, they are always introduced or dismissed with some kind of censure or remark ; that the most easy and credulous reader may know what to trust to, and not fear being secretly surprised into a belief of doubtful and fabulous reports. And now, after all, I am sufficiently sensible how lank and thin this account is, nor can the reader be less satisfied with it than I am myself ; and I have only this piece of justice and charity to beg of him, that he would suspend his censure till

he has taken a little pains to inquire into the state of the times and things I write of; and then, however he may challenge my prudence in undertaking it, he will not, I hope, see reason to charge me with want of care and faithfulness in the pursuance of it.

THE  
LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

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INTRODUCTION.

1. JESUS CHRIST, the great apostle and high-priest of our profession, being appointed by God to be the supreme ruler and governor of his church, was, like Moses, faithful in all his house ; but with this honourable advantage, that Moses was faithful as a servant, Christ as a son over his own house, which he erected, established, and governed with all possible care and diligence. Nor could he give a greater instance either of his fidelity towards God or his love and kindness to the souls of men, than that after he had purchased a family to himself, and could now no longer upon earth manage its interests in his own person, he would not return back to heaven till he had constituted several orders and officers in his church, who might superintend and conduct its affairs, and according to the various circumstances of its state, administer to the needs and exigencies of his family. Accordingly therefore, 'he gave some apostles, and some prophets,

and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.<sup>1</sup> The first and prime class of officers is that of apostles: God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, &c. First apostles, as far in office as honour before the rest, their election more immediate, their commission more large and comprehensive, the powers and privileges wherewith they were furnished greater and more honourable. Prophecy, the gift of miracles and expelling dæmons, the order of pastors and teachers, were all spiritual powers, and ensigns of great authority, ἀλλὰ τούτων ἀπάντων μέζων ἐστὶν ἀρχὴ ἡ ἀποστολική, says Chrysostom; <sup>2</sup> “but the apostolic eminency is far greater than all these;” which therefore he calls a spiritual consulship: an apostle having as great pre-eminence above all other officers in the church, as the consul had above all other magistrates in Rome. These apostles were a few select persons whom our Lord chose out of the rest, to devolve part of the government upon their shoulders, and to depute for the first planting and settling Christianity in the world: ‘he chose twelve, whom he named apostles;’ <sup>3</sup> of whose lives and acts being to give an historical account in the following work, it may not, possibly, be unuseful to premise some general remarks concerning them, not re-

<sup>1</sup> Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13.

<sup>2</sup> Serm. de Util. Lection. Sac. Scrip. tom. viii. edit. Savil. p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> Luke, vi. 13.

specting this or that particular person, but of a general relation to the whole; wherein we shall especially take notice of the importance of the word, the nature of the employment, the fitness and qualification of the persons, and the duration and continuance of the office.

2. The word *ἀπόστολος*, or *sent*, is among ancient writers applied either to things, actions, or persons. To things: thus, those dismissory letters that were granted to such who appealed from an inferior to a superior judicature, were in the language of the Roman laws usually called *apostoli*:<sup>1</sup> Thus, a packet-boat was stiled *ἀπόστολον πλοῖον*, because sent up and down for advice and dispatch of business. Thus, though in somewhat a different sense, the lesson taken out of the epistles is in the ancient Greek liturgies, called *ἀπόστολος*;<sup>2</sup> because usually taken out of the apostles' writings. Sometimes it is applied to actions, and so imports no more than mission, or the very act of sending. Thus the setting out a fleet or a naval expedition, was wont to be called *ἀπόστολος*; so Suidas tells us,<sup>3</sup> that as the persons designed for the care and management of the fleet were called *ἀπόστολεῖς*, so the very sending forth of the ships themselves, *αἱ τῶν νεῶν ἐκπομπαί*, were stiled *ἀπόστολοι*. Lastly; what principally falls under our present consideration, it is applied to persons; and so imports no more than a messenger, a person sent upon some special errand, for the discharge of some peculiar affair in his

<sup>1</sup> L. unic. ff. lib. xlix. tit. 6. Vide L. 106, tit. 16, lib. 1. et Paul. J. C. Sentent. lib. ix. tit. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Chrysost. Liturg. in Ritual Græc. p. 68.

<sup>3</sup> Suidas in voc. *ἀποστολαί*. ex Demosth. vid. Harpocr. Lex. in Dec. Rhet.

name that sent him. Thus Epaphroditus is called the apostle or messenger of the Philippians,<sup>1</sup> when sent by them to St. Paul at Rome. Thus Titus and his companions are stiled *ἀπόστολοι*, “the messengers of the churches.” So our Lord; ‘He that is sent,’ *ἀπόστολος*, an apostle or messenger ‘is not greater than he that sent him.’ This, then, being the common notion of the word, our Lord fixes it to a particular use, applying it to those select persons whom he had made choice of to act by that peculiar authority and commission which he had derived upon them. Twelve, whom he also named apostles; that is, commissioners, those who were to be ambassadors for Christ, to be sent up and down the world in his name, to plant the faith, to govern and superintend the church at present, and, by their wise and prudent settlement of affairs, to provide for the future exigencies of the church.

3. The next thing then to be considered is the nature of their office; and under this inquiry we shall make these following remarks. First, it is not to be doubted but that our Lord in founding this office had some respect to the state of things in the Jewish church; I mean not only in general, that there should be superior and subordinate officers, as there were superior and inferior orders under the Mosaic dispensation; but that herein he had an eye to some usage and custom common among them. Now, among the Jews, as all messengers were called *מַשְׁלִיחִים*, or apostles;<sup>2</sup> so were

<sup>1</sup> Phil. ii. 25; 2 Cor. viii. 23; John, xlii. 16.

<sup>2</sup> *Ἀποστόλους δὲ εἰσέτι ἐν νῦν ἔθος ἐστὶ Ἰουδαίους ὀνομάζειν, τοὺς ἐγκύκλια γράμματα παρὰ τῶν ἀρχόντων αὐτῶν ἀνακομιζομένους.*—Euseb. in Caten. M.S. apud Heins. exercit. in Luc. vi.

they went to dispatch some with peculiar letters of authority and commission, whereby they acted as proxies and deputies of those that sent them: thence their proverb **שדוחו של אדם כמותו**, "Every man's apostle is as himself;" that is, whatever he does is looked upon to be as firm and valid as if the person himself had done it. Thus, when Saul was sent by the Sanhedrim to Damascus to apprehend the Jewish converts, he was furnished with letters from the high-priest, enabling him to act as his commissary in that matter. Indeed Epiphanius<sup>1</sup> tells us of a sort of persons called apostles, who were assessors and counsellors to the Jewish patriarch; constantly attending upon him, to advise him in matters pertaining to the law; and sent by him (as he intimates<sup>2</sup>) sometimes to inspect and reform the manners of the priests and Jewish clergy, and the irregularities of country synagogues, with commission to gather the tenths and first-fruits due in all the provinces under his jurisdiction. Such apostles we find mentioned both by Julian the emperor,<sup>3</sup> in an epistle to the Jews, and in a law of the emperor Honorius,<sup>4</sup> employed by the patriarch to gather once a year the *aurum coronarium*, or crown gold, a tribute annually paid by them to the Roman emperors. But these apostles could not, under that notion, be extant in our Saviour's time; though sure we are there was then something like it. Philo the Jew,<sup>5</sup> more than once mentioning the **ἱεροπομοὶ καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν χρυσὸν καὶ ἀργυρὸν πλείστον κομίζοντες εἰς τὸ ἱερόν, τὸν ἀθροισθέντα ἐκ τῶν ἀπαρχῶν**, "The sacred messengers annually

<sup>1</sup> Hæres. 30, p. 60.    <sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 63.    <sup>3</sup> Epist. 25, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup> L. 14. C. Th. de Judæis, lib. xvi. tit. 8.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. de Legat. ad Caium, p. 1023. vide p. 1035, E.



sent to collect the holy treasure paid by way of first-fruits, and to carry it to the temple at Jerusalem." However, our Lord in conformity to the general custom of those times, of appointing apostles or messengers, as their proxies and deputies to act in their names, called and denominated those apostles, whom he peculiarly chose to represent his person, to communicate his mind and will to the world, and to act as ambassadors or commissioners in his room and stead.

4. Secondly, we observe that the persons thus deputed by our Saviour were not left uncertain, but reduced to a fixed definite number, confined to the just number of twelve; 'he ordained twelve that they should be with him.'<sup>1</sup> A number that seems to carry something of mystery and peculiar design in it, as appears in that the apostles were so careful upon the fall of Judas immediately to supply it. The fathers are very wide and different in their conjectures about the reason of it. St. Augustine<sup>2</sup> thinks our Lord herein had respect to the four quarters of the world, which were to be called by the preaching of the gospel, which being multiplied by three (to denote the Trinity, in whose name they were to be called) make twelve. Tertullian<sup>3</sup> will have them typified by the twelve fountains in Elim; the apostles being sent out to water and refresh the dry, thirsty world with the knowledge of the truth; by the twelve precious stones in Aaron's breast-plate, to illuminate the church, the garment which Christ our great high-priest has put on; by

<sup>1</sup> Mark, iii. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Serm. iii. in Psalm 103, Col. 1192, tom. viii. vid. in Psalm 59, Col. 603.

<sup>3</sup> Adv. Marcion. lib. iv. c. 13, p. 425.

the twelve stones which Joshua chose out of Jordan, to lay up within the ark of the testament, respecting the firmness and solidity of the apostles' faith, their being chosen by the true Jesus or Joshua at their baptism in Jordan, and their being admitted into the inner sanctuary of his covenant. By others we are told, that it was shadowed out by the twelve spies taken out of every tribe, and sent to discover the land of promise; or by the twelve gates of the city in Ezekiel's vision; or by the twelve bells appendent to Aaron's garment, 'their sound going out into all the world, and their words unto the ends of the earth.'<sup>1</sup> But it were endless, and to very little purpose, to reckon up all the conjectures of this nature, there being scarce any one number of twelve mentioned in the Scripture, which is not by some of the ancients adapted and applied to this of the twelve apostles, wherein an ordinary fancy might easily enough pick out a mystery. That which seems to put in the most rational plea is, that our Lord, being now about to form a new spiritual commonwealth, a kind of mystical Israel, pitched upon this number in conformity either to the twelve patriarchs, as founders of the twelve tribes of Israel, or to the twelve *φυλάρχαι*, or chief heads, as standing rulers of those tribes among the Jews; as we shall afterwards possibly more particularly remark.<sup>2</sup> Thirdly, these apostles were immediately called and sent by Christ himself, elected out of the body of his disciples and followers, and received their commission from his own mouth. Indeed, Matthias was not one of the first election, being taken in

<sup>1</sup> Just. Mart. Dial. cum Tryphon. p. 260.

<sup>2</sup> See St. Peter's Life, sect. 3, num. 2.

upon Judas's apostasy, after our Lord's ascension into heaven. But besides that he had been one of the seventy disciples, called and sent out by our Saviour, that extraordinary declaration of the divine will and pleasure that appeared in determining his election, was in a manner equivalent to the first election. As for St. Paul, he was not one of the twelve, taken in as a supernumerary apostle ; but yet an apostle as well as they, and that 'not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ ;'<sup>1</sup> as he pleads his own cause against the insinuations of those impostors who traduced him as an apostle only at the second hand ; whereas he was immediately called by Christ as well as they, and in a more extraordinary manner ; they were called by him while he was yet in his state of meanness and humiliation ; he, when Christ was now advanced upon the throne, and appeared to him encircled with those glorious emanations of brightness and majesty which he was not able to endure. I observe no more concerning this, than that an immediate call has ever been accounted so necessary to give credit and reputation to their doctrine, that the most notorious impostors have pretended to it. Thus Manes,<sup>2</sup> the founder of the Manichæan sect, was wont in his epistles to stile himself the apostle of Jesus Christ, as pretending himself to be the person whom our Lord had promised to send into the world, and that accordingly the Holy Ghost was actually sent in him ; and therefore he constituted twelve disciples always to attend his person, in imitation of the number of the apostolic college. And how often the Turkish impostor does upon this

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Aug. de Hæres. c. 46, Col. 23.

account call himself the apostle of God, every one that has but once seen the Alcoran is able to tell.

5. Fourthly, the main work and employment of these apostles was to preach the gospel, to establish Christianity, and to govern the church that was to be founded, as Christ's immediate deputies and vicegerents: they were to instruct men in the doctrines of the gospel, to disciple the world, and to baptize and initiate men into the faith of Christ; and to constitute and ordain guides and ministers of religion, persons peculiarly set apart for holy ministrations, to censure and punish obstinate and contumacious offenders, to compose and overrule disorders and divisions, to command or countermand as occasion was, being vested with an extraordinary authority and power of disposing things for the edification of the church. This office the apostles never exercised in its full extent and latitude during Christ's residence upon earth; for though upon their election he sent them forth to preach and to baptize, yet this was only a narrow and temporary employment, and they quickly returned to their private stations; the main power being still executed and administered by Christ himself, the complete exercise whereof was not actually devolved upon them till he was ready to leave the world: for then it was that he told them, 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; receive ye the Holy Ghost; whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.'<sup>1</sup> Whereby he conferred in some proportion the same authority upon them which he himself had derived from his Father.

<sup>1</sup> John, xx. 21, 22, 23.

Fifthly, this commission given to the apostles was unlimited and universal, not only in respect of power, as enabling them to discharge all acts of religion, relating either to ministry or government;<sup>1</sup> but in respect of place, not confining them to this or that particular province, but leaving them the whole world as their diocess to preach in, they being *destinati nationibus magistri*, in Tertullian's phrase,<sup>2</sup> designed to be the masters and instructors of all nations: so runs their commission, 'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;'<sup>3</sup> that is, to all men, the *πᾶσα κτίσις* of the Evangelist answering to the *כל הכריא* amongst the Jews, 'to all creatures;' whereby they used to denote all men in general, but especially the Gentiles in opposition to the Jews. Indeed, while our Saviour lived, the apostolical ministry extended no farther than Judea; but he being gone to heaven, the partition wall was broken down, and their way was open into all places and countries. And herein how admirably did the Christian economy transcend the Jewish dispensation! The preaching of the prophets, like the light that comes in at the window,<sup>4</sup> was confined only to the house of Israel; while the doctrine of the gospel preached by the apostles, was like the

<sup>1</sup> "Ἀρχόντες εἰσιν ὑπὸ Θεοῦ χειροτονηθέντες οἱ Ἀπόστολοι ἀρχόντες, οὐκ ἔθνη ἢ πόλεις διαφόρους λαμβάνοντες, ἀλλὰ πάντες κοινῇ τὴν οἰκουμένην ἐμπιστευθέντες.—Chrysost. Serm. περὶ τοῦ, ὅτι χρήσιμος ἡ τῶν γραφῶν ἀνάγνωσις, p. 115, tom. viii. edit. Savil.

<sup>2</sup> De præscript. Hæret. c. 20, p. 208. <sup>3</sup> Mark, xvi. 15.

<sup>4</sup> "Ὅσπερ δὲ ἐστὶ φῶς διὰ θυρίδος εἰσερχόμενον, ὃ δὲ ἥλιος ὅλη τῇ οἰκουμένῃ τὰς ἀκτῖνας ἐπαφίησιν· οὕτως ἦσαν οἱ προφῆται τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου μόνον φωτῆρες τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ· οἱ δὲ Ἀπόστολοι ἥλιοι ἦσαν ἐκλάμποντες τὰς ἀκτῖνας εἰς ὅλα τὰ μέρη τοῦ κόσμου.—Macar. Homil. xiv. p. 171.

light of the sun in the firmament, that diffused its beams, and propagated its heat and influence into all quarters of the world; 'their sound going out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.' It is true, for the more prudent and orderly management of things, they are generally said by the ancients to have divided the world into so many quarters and portions, to which they were severally to betake themselves; Peter to Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, &c.; St. John to Asia; St. Andrew to Scythia, &c. But they did not strictly tie themselves to those particular provinces that were assigned them, but, as occasion was, made excursions into other parts; though for the main they had a more peculiar inspection over those parts that were allotted to them, usually residing at some principal city of the province; as St. John at Ephesus, St. Philip at Hierapolis, &c.; whence they might have a more convenient prospect of affairs round about them; and hence it was that these places more peculiarly got the title of apostolical churches, because first planted, or eminently watered and cultivated by some apostles, *matrices et originales fidei*, as Tertullian<sup>1</sup> calls them; "mother churches and the originals of the faith;" because here the Christian doctrine was first sown, and hence planted and propagated to the countries round about; "*Ecclesias apud unamquamque civitatem condiderunt, a quibus traducem fidei et semina doctrinæ, cæteræ exinde ecclesiæ mutuatae sunt,*"<sup>2</sup> as his own words are.

6. In pursuance of this general commission, we find the apostles, not long after our Lord's ascen-

<sup>1</sup> De Præscript. Hæret. c. 21, p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. c. 20, p. 208.

sion, traversing almost all parts of the then known world: St. Andrew in Scythia, and those northern countries; St. Thomas and Bartholomew in India; St. Simon and St. Mark in Africa, Egypt, and the parts of Libya and Mauritania; St. Paul, and probably Peter, and some others, in the farthest regions of the west; and all this done in the space of less than forty years; viz., before the destruction of the Jewish state, by Titus and the Roman army. For so our Lord had expressly foretold, that 'the gospel of the kingdom should be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations, before the end came;'<sup>1</sup> that is, the end of the Jewish state, which the apostles, a little before, had called 'the end of the word,'<sup>2</sup> συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος, the shutting up or consummation of the age, the putting a final period to that present state and dispensation that the Jews were under. And indeed strange it is to consider, that in so few years these evangelical messengers should overrun all countries: with what an incredible swiftness did the Christian faith, like lightning, pierce from east to west, and diffuse itself over all quarters of the world; and that not only unassisted by any secular advantages, but in defiance of the most fierce and potent opposition, which every where set itself against it! It is true, the impostors of Mahomet in a very little time gained a great part of the East; but besides that this was not comparable to the universal spreading of Christianity, his doctrine was calculated on purpose to gratify men's lusts, and especially to comply with the loose and wanton manners of the East; and, which is above all, had the sword to hew out

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxiv. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ver. 3.

its way before it; and we know how ready, even without force, in all changes and revolutions of the world, the conquered have been to follow the religion of the conquerors. Whereas the apostles had no visible advantages, nay, had all the enraged powers of the world to contend against them. And yet, in despite of all, went on in triumph, and quickly made their way into those places where for so many ages no other conquest ever came: "Those parts of Britain," as Tertullian observes,<sup>1</sup> "which were unconquerable and unapproachable by the power of the Roman armies, submitting their necks to the yoke of Christ." A mighty evidence (as he there argues) of Christ's Divinity, and that he was the true Messiah. And, indeed, no reasonable account can be given of the strange and successful progress of the Christian religion in those first ages of it, but that it was the birth of heaven, and had a divine and invisible power going along with it to succeed and prosper it. St. Chrysostom<sup>2</sup> discourses this argument at large, some of whose elegant reasonings I shall here transcribe. He tells the Gentile (with whom he was disputing) that he would not prove Christ's Deity by a demonstration from heaven, by his creation of the world, his great and stupendous miracles, his raising the dead, curing the blind, expelling devils, nor from the mighty promises of a future state, and the resurrection of the dead, (which an infidel might easily not only question but deny,) but from what was sufficiently evident and obvious to the meanest idiot, —his planting and propagating Christianity in the world. For it is not, says he, in the power of a

<sup>1</sup> Adv. Jud. c. 7, p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. quod Chr. sit Deus, c. 1, tom. v. 726.



mere man, in so short a time to encircle the world, to compass sea and land, and in matters of so great importance, to rescue mankind from the slavery of absurd and unreasonable customs, and the powerful tyranny of evil habits; and these not Romans only, but Persians, and the most barbarous nations of the world. A reformation which he wrought, not by force and the power of the sword, nor by pouring into the world numerous legions and armies; but by a few inconsiderable men, (no more at first than eleven,) a company of obscure and mean, simple and illiterate, poor and helpless, naked and unarmed persons, who had scarce a shoe to tread on, or a coat to cover them. And yet by these he persuaded so great a part of mankind to be able freely to reason, not only of things of the present, but of a future state; to renounce the laws of their country, and throw off those ancient and inveterate customs which had taken root for so many ages, and planted others in their room; and reduced men from those easy ways, whereinto they were hurried, into the more rugged and difficult paths of virtue. All which he did while he had to contend with opposite powers, and when he himself had undergone the most ignominious death, even the death of the cross. Afterwards he addresses himself to the Jew, and discourses with him much after the same rate. Consider, says he,<sup>1</sup> and bethink thyself, what it is in so short a time to fill the whole world with so many famous churches, to convert so many nations to the faith, to prevail with men to forsake the religion of their country, to root up their rites and customs, to shake off the

<sup>1</sup> Lib. quod Chr. sit Deus, c. 11. tom. v. p. 746.

empire of lust and pleasure, and the laws of vice, like dust; to abolish and abominate their temples and their altars, their idols and their sacrifices, their profane and impious festivals, as dirt and dung; and instead hereof to set up Christian altars in all places, among the Romans, Persians, Scythians, Moors, and Indians; and not there only, but in the countries beyond this world of ours. For even the British islands that lie beyond the ocean, and those that are in it, have felt the power of the Christian faith; churches and altars being erected there to the service of Christ. A matter truly great and admirable, and which would clearly have demonstrated a divine and supereminent power, although there had been no opposition in the case, but that all things had run on calmly and smoothly; to think that in so few years the Christian faith should be able to reclaim the whole world from its vicious customs, and to win them over to other manners, more laborious and difficult, repugnant both to their native inclinations and to the laws and principles of their education, and such as obliged them to a more strict and accurate course of life; and these persons not one or two, not twenty or an hundred, but in a manner all mankind; and this brought about by no other instruments than a few rude and unlearned, private and unknown tradesmen, who had neither estate nor reputation, learning nor eloquence, kindred nor country, to recommend them to the world; a few fishermen and tent-makers, and whom, distinguished by their language, as well as their religion, the rest of the world scorned as barbarous. And yet these were the men by whom our Lord built up his church, and extended it from one end of the world unto the

other. Other considerations there are, with which the father does urge and illustrate this argument, which I forbear to insist on in this place.

7. Sixthly; the power and authority conveyed by this commission to the apostles was equally conferred upon all of them. They were all chosen at the same time, all equally empowered to preach and baptize, all equally intrusted with the power of binding and loosing, all invested with the same mission, and equally furnished with the same gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost. Indeed the advocates of the church of Rome do, with a mighty zeal and fierceness, contend for St. Peter's being head and prince of the apostles, advanced by Christ to a supremacy and prerogative not only above, but over the rest of the apostles; and not without reason, the fortunes of that church being concerned in the supremacy of St. Peter. No wonder, therefore, they ransack all corners, press and force in whatever may but seem to give countenance to it. Witness those thin and miserable shifts, which Bellarmine calls arguments, to prove and make it good; so utterly devoid of all rational conviction, so unable to justify themselves to sober and considering men, that a man would think they had been contrived for no other purpose than to cheat fools, and make wise men laugh. And the truth is, nothing with me more shakes the reputation of the wisdom of that learned man, than his making use of such weak and trifling arguments in so important, and concerning an article, so vital and essential to the constitution of that church. As when he argues Peter's superiority<sup>1</sup> from the mere

<sup>1</sup> De Rom. Pontif. lib. i. c. 17, 18, et seq.

changing of his name, (for what is this to supremacy? besides that it was not done to him alone, the same being done to James and John,) from his being first reckoned up in the catalogue of apostles, his walking with Christ upon the water, his paying tribute for his master and himself, his being commanded to let down the net, and Christ's teaching in Peter's ship, (and this ship must denote the church, and Peter's being owner of it, entitle him to be supreme ruler and governor of the church; so Bellarmine, in terms as plain as he could well express it,) from Christ's first washing Peter's feet, (though the story recorded by the evangelist says no such thing,) and his foretelling only his death: all which, and many more prerogatives of St. Peter, to the number of no less than twenty-eight, are summoned in to give evidence in this cause; and many of these too drawn out of apocryphal and supposititious authors, and not only uncertain, but absurd and fabulous; and yet upon such arguments as these do they found his paramount authority. A plain evidence of a desperate and sinking cause, when such twigs must be laid hold on to support and keep it above water. Had they suffered Peter to be content with a primacy of order, (which his age and gravity seemed to challenge for him,) no wise and peaceable man would have denied it, as being a thing ordinarily practised among equals, and necessary to the well governing of a society: but when nothing but a primacy of power will serve the turn, as if the rest of the apostles had been inferior to him, this may by no means be granted, as being expressly contrary to the positive determination of our Saviour, when the apostles were contending about this very thing,

‘Which of them should be accounted the greatest;’<sup>1</sup> he thus quickly decides the case: ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that are great, exercise authority upon them. But ye shall not be so: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.’<sup>2</sup> Than which nothing could have been more peremptorily spoken, to rebuke this naughty spirit of pre-eminence. Nor do we ever find St. Peter himself laying claim to any such power, or the apostles giving him the least shadow of it. In the whole course of his affairs there are no intimations of this matter: in his epistle he styles himself but their ‘fellow presbyter;’ and expressly forbids the governors of the church to ‘lord it over God’s heritage.’ When dispatched by the rest of the apostles upon a message to Samaria, he never disputes their authority to do it: when accused by them for going in unto the Gentiles, does he stand upon his prerogative? no, but submissively apologizes for himself: nay, when smartly reprovèd by St. Paul at Antioch, (when, if ever, his credit lay at stake,) do we find him excepting against it as an affront to his supremacy, and a saucy controlling his superior? Surely quite the contrary: he quietly submitted to the reproof, as one that was sensible how justly he had deserved it. Nor can it be supposed but that St. Paul would have carried it towards him with a greater reverence, had any such peculiar sovereignty been then known to the world. How confidently does St. Paul assert himself to be no whit ‘inferior to the chiefest apostles,’

<sup>1</sup> Luke, xxii. 24, 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xx. 25, 26, 27.

not to Peter himself? 'the gospel of the uncircumcision being committed to him, as that of the circumcision was to Peter.' Is Peter often named first among the apostles? elsewhere others; sometimes James, sometimes Paul and Apollos are placed before him. Did Christ honour him with some singular commendations? An honourable eulogium conveys no supereminent power and sovereignty. Was he dear to Christ? We know another that was the 'beloved disciple.' So little warrant is there to exalt one above the rest, where Christ made all alike. If from Scripture we descend to the ancient writers of the church, we shall find that though the fathers bestow very great and honourable titles upon Peter, yet they give the same, or what are equivalent, to others of the apostles.<sup>1</sup> Hesychius styles St. James the great, "the brother of our Lord, the commander of the new Jerusalem, the prince of priests, the exarch (or chief) of the apostles, ἐν κεφαλῇς κορυφὴν, the top (or crown) amongst the heads, the great light amongst the lamps, the most illustrious and resplendent amongst the stars: it was Peter that preached, but it was James that made the determination," &c.<sup>2</sup> Of St. Andrew he gives this encomium; that "he was the sacerdotal trumpet, the first-born of the apostolical choir, πρωτοπαγῆς τῆς ἐκκλησίας κύλος, the prime and firm pillar of the church, Peter before Peter, the foundation of the foundation, the first fruits of the beginning."<sup>3</sup> Peter and John are said to be

<sup>1</sup> "Hoc erant utique et cæteri apostoli, quod fuit Petrus, pari consortio præditi et honoris et potestatis."—Cyprian. de Unitat. Eccles. p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> Orat. in S. Jac. apud Phot. cod. cclxxv. col. 1525.

<sup>3</sup> Encom. S. Thom. ibid. cod. cclxix. col. 1488.

*ισότιμοι ἀλλήλοις*, "equally honourable," by St. Cyril,<sup>1</sup> with his whole synod of Alexandria. "St. John," says Chrysostom, "was Christ's beloved, the pillar of all the churches in the world, who had the keys of heaven, drank of the Lord's cup, was washed with his baptism, and with confidence lay in his bosom."<sup>2</sup> And of St. Paul he tells us, that "he was the most excellent of all men, the teacher of the world, the bridegroom of Christ, the planter of the church, the wise master-builder, greater than the apostles;"<sup>3</sup> and much more to the same purpose. Elsewhere he says, that "the care of the whole world was committed to him; that nothing could be more noble or illustrious: yea, that (his miracles considered) he was more excellent than kings themselves."<sup>4</sup> And a little after he calls him "the tongue of the earth, the light of the churches, τὸν θεμέλιον τῆς πίστεως, τὸν σῦλον καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, the foundation of the faith, the pillar and ground of truth,"<sup>5</sup> And in a discourse on purpose, wherein he compares Peter and Paul together, he makes them of equal esteem and virtue;<sup>6</sup> "τί Πέτρου μεῖζον; τί δε Παύλου ἴσον; What greater than Peter? What equal to Paul? a blessed pair! ἡ πιστευθεῖσα δλον τοῦ κόσμου τὰς ψυχὰς, who had the souls of the whole world committed to their charge." But instances of this nature were endless and infinite. If the fathers at any time style Peter prince of the apostles, they mean no more by it than the

<sup>1</sup> In Conc. Ephes. Concll. tom. ii. p. 209.

<sup>2</sup> Prolog. in Joan. p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> De Pet. fil. Zeb. p. 378, tom. i.

<sup>4</sup> In illud, Sal. Aquil. et Prisc. p. 218, tom. v.

<sup>5</sup> In illud, Sal. Aquil. et Prisc. tom. v. p. 221.

<sup>6</sup> Serm. in Petr. et Paul. p. 261, tom. 6.

best and purest Latin writers mean by *princeps*; the first or chief person of the number, more considerable than the rest, either for his age or zeal. Thus Eusebius tells us, "Peter was τῶν λοιπῶν ἀπάντων προήγορος, the prolocutor of all the rest, ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα, for the greatness and generosity of his mind:"<sup>1</sup> that is, in Chrysostom's language, he was "the mouth and chief of the apostles, ὁ πανταχοῦ θερμὸς, because eager and forward at every turn, and ready to answer those questions which were put to others."<sup>2</sup> In short, as he had no prerogative above the rest, besides his being the chairman and president of the assembly; so was it granted to him upon no other considerations than those of his age, zeal, and gravity, for which he was more eminent than the rest.

8. We proceed next to inquire into the fitness and qualification of the persons commissioned for this employment; and we shall find them admirably qualified to discharge it, if we consider this following account. First, they immediately received the doctrine of the gospel from the mouth of Christ himself: he intended them for *legati à latere*, his peculiar ambassadors to the world, and therefore furnished them with instructions from his own mouth; and in order hereunto he trained them up for some years under his own discipline and institution; he made them to understand the 'mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, when to others it was not given;' treated them with the affection of a father, and the freedom and familiarity of a friend. 'Henceforth I call you not

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 14, p. 52.

<sup>2</sup> In Matt. c. 16, p. 483.



servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.' They heard all his sermons, were privy both to his public and private discourses; what he preached abroad he expounded to them at home: he gradually instructed them in the knowledge of divine things, and imparted to them the notions and mysteries of the gospel, not all at once, but as they were able to bear them. By which means they were sufficiently capable of giving a satisfactory account of that doctrine to others, which had been so immediately, so frequently communicated to themselves. Secondly, they were infallibly secured from error in delivering the doctrines and principles of Christianity: for though they were not absolutely privileged from failures and miscarriages in their lives, (these being of more personal and private consideration,) yet were they infallible in their doctrine, this being a matter whereupon the salvation and eternal interests of men did depend. And for this end they had the 'spirit of truth' promised to them, who should 'guide them into all truth.' Under the conduct of this unerring guide they all steered the same course, and taught and spake the same things, though at different times, and in distant places: and for what was consigned to writing, 'all Scripture was given by inspiration of God, and the holy men spake not but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' Hence that exact and admirable harmony that is in all their writings and relations, as being all equally dictated by the same spirit of

<sup>1</sup> John, xv. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, xvi. 13.

truth. Thirdly, they had been eye-witnesses of all the material passages of our Saviour's life, continually conversant with him from the commencing of his public ministry till his ascension into heaven: they had surveyed all his actions, seen all his miracles, observed the whole method of his conversation, and some of them attended him in his most private solitudes and retirements. And this could not but be a very rational satisfaction to the minds of men, when the publishers of the gospel solemnly declared to the world, that they reported nothing concerning our Saviour but what they had seen with their own eyes, and of the truth whereof they were as competent judges as the acutest philosopher in the world. Nor could there be any just reason to suspect that they imposed upon men in what they deliverd; for besides their naked plainness and simplicity in all other passages of their lives, they cheerfully submitted to the most exquisite hardships, tortures, and sufferings, merely to attest the truth of what they published to the world. Next to the evidence of our own senses, no testimony is more valid and forcible than his who relates what himself has seen. Upon this account our Lord told his apostles, 'that they should be witnesses to him both in Judea and Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth.'<sup>1</sup> And so necessary a qualification of an apostle was this thought to be, that it was almost the only condition propounded in the choice of a new apostle, after the fall of Judas: 'Wherefore,' says Peter, 'of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,

<sup>1</sup> Acts, I. 8.

beginning from the baptism of John, unto the same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.'<sup>1</sup> Accordingly we find the apostles constantly making use of this argument as the most rational evidence to convince those whom they had to deal with. 'We are witnesses of all things which Jesus did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly, not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead; and he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he that is ordained of God to be judge of the quick and dead.'<sup>2</sup> Thus St. John, after the same way of arguing, appeals to sensible demonstration: 'That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life: (for the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us:) that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also might have fellowship with us.'<sup>3</sup> This, to name no more, St. Peter thought a sufficient vindication of the apostolical doctrine from the suspicion of forgery and imposture: 'We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts, i. 21, 22.

<sup>3</sup> 1 John, i. 1, 2, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Acts, x. 39, 40, &c.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Peter, i. 16, 17.

God had frequently given testimony to the divinity of our blessed Saviour, by visible manifestations and appearances from heaven, and particularly by an audible voice: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.' Now 'this voice which came from heaven,' says he, 'we heard when we were with him in the holy mount.'

9. Fourthly; the apostles were invested with a power of working miracles, as the readiest means to procure their religion a firm belief and entertainment in the minds of men. For the miracles are the great confirmation of the truth of any doctrine, and the most rational evidence of a divine commission. For seeing God only can create, and control the laws of nature, produce something out of nothing, and call things that are not as if they were, give eyes to them that were born blind, raise the dead, &c. things plainly beyond all possible powers of nature, no man that believes the wisdom and goodness of an infinite being, can suppose that this God of truth should affix his seal to a lie, or communicate this power to any that would abuse it, to confirm and countenance delusions and impostures. Nicodemus's reasoning was very plain and convictive, when he concludes that Christ 'must needs be a teacher come from God, for that no man could do those miracles that he did, except God were with him.'<sup>1</sup> The force of which argument lies here, that nothing but a divine power can work miracles, and that Almighty God cannot be supposed miraculously to assist any but those, whom he himself sends upon his own errand. The stupid and barbarous Lycaonians, when they be-

<sup>1</sup> John, iii. 2.

held the man who had been a cripple from his mother's womb cured by St. Paul in an instant, only with the speaking of a word, saw that there was something in it more than human, and therefore concluded that 'the Gods were come down to them in the likeness of men.'<sup>1</sup> Upon this account St. Paul<sup>2</sup> reckons miracles among the τὰ σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου, the signs and evidences of an apostle; whom therefore Chrysostom<sup>3</sup> brings in elegantly pleading for himself, that though he could not show, as the signs of his priesthood and ministry, long robes and gaudy vestments, with bells sounding at their borders, as the Aaronical priests did of old; though he had no golden crowns or holy mitres, yet could he produce what was infinitely more venerable and regardable than all these—unquestionable signs and miracles: he came not with altars and oblations, with a number of strange and symbolical rites; but what was greater, raised the dead, cast out devils, cured the blind, healed the lame, making the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through many signs and wonders wrought by the power of the Spirit of God. These were the things that clearly showed that their mission and mi-

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xiv. 10, 11.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Τῆς ἱερουργίας μου ταύτης τὰ σύμβολα, ἢ τῆς χειροτονίας, ἔχω πολλά δεῖξαι τὰ τεκμήρια, οὐ ποδήρη ἢ κώδωνας, καθάπερ οἱ παλαιοὶ, οὐδὲ μίτραν, ἢ κίδαριν, ἀλλὰ πολλῶ φρικωδέστερα τούτων σημεῖα ἢ θαύματα—εἶδες πῶς ταῦτα τῶν παλαιῶν θαυμαστότερα ἢ φρικωδέστερα; ἡ θυσία, ἡ προσφορά, τὰ σύμβολα; ὅταν γὰρ εἴπῃ (ἐν λόγῳ) ἢ ἔργῳ, ἐν δυνάμει σημείων ἢ τεράτων) τοῦτο λέγει, τὴν διδασκαλίαν, τὴν περὶ βασιλείας φιλοσοφίαν, τὴν τῶν ἔργων, ἢ τῆς πολιτείας ἐπίδειξιν, τοὺς νεκροὺς τοὺς ἐγειρομένους, τοὺς δαίμονας τοὺς ἱλαυνομένους, τοὺς θεραπευομένους τοὺς τυφλοὺς, τοὺς κηδύντας χωλοὺς, τὰ ἄλλα τεράσια. ἅπερ ἅπαντα ἐργάζετο τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐν ἡμῖν.—Chrysost. Homil. 29, in Rom. pp. 302, 303.

nistry was not from men, nor taken up of their own heads, but that they acted herein by a divine warrant and authority. That therefore it might plainly appear to the world that they did not falsify in what they said, or deliver any more than God had given them in commission, he enabled them to do strange and miraculous operations, 'bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.'<sup>1</sup> This was a power put into the first draught of their commission, when confined only to the cities of Israel: 'As ye go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead; cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.'<sup>2</sup> But more fully confirmed unto them when our Lord went to heaven; then he told them that 'these signs should follow them that believe; that in his name they should cast out devils, and speak with new tongues; that they should take up serpents, and if they drank any deadly thing, it should not hurt them; that they should lay hands on the sick, and they should recover.'<sup>3</sup> And the event was accordingly, 'for they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.' When Paul and Barnabas came up to the council at Jerusalem, this was one of the first things they gave an account of, 'all the multitude keeping silence while they declared what miracles and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.'<sup>4</sup> Thus the very 'shadow of Peter as he passed by cured the sick:' thus 'God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul; so that from

<sup>1</sup> Heb. ii. 4.<sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 7, 8.<sup>3</sup> Mark, xvi. 17—20.<sup>4</sup> Acts, xv. 12.

his body were brought unto the sick, handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them.'<sup>1</sup> So that, besides the innate characters of divinity which the Christian religion brought along with it, containing nothing but what was highly reasonable, and very becoming God to reveal, it had the highest external evidence that any religion was capable of—the attestation of great and unquestionable miracles, done not once or twice, not privately and in corners, not before a few simple and credulous persons, but frequently and at every turn, publicly and in places of the most solemn course, before the wisest and most judicious inquirers; and this power of miracles continued not only during the apostles' time, but for some ages after.

10. But because, besides miracles in general, the Scripture takes particular notice of many gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost conferred upon the apostles and first preachers of the gospel, it may not be amiss to consider some of the chiefest and most material of them, as we find them enumerated by the apostle;<sup>2</sup> only premising this observation, that though these gifts were distinctly distributed to persons of an inferior order, so that one had this, and another that, yet were they (probably) all conferred upon the apostles, and doubtless in larger proportions than upon the rest. First, we take notice of the gift of prophecy, a clear evidence of divine inspiration, and an extraordinary mission: 'the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xix. 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 9, 10.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xix. 10.

It had been for many ages the signal and honourable privilege of the Jewish church; and that the Christian economy might challenge as sacred regards from men, and that it might appear that God had not withdrawn his Spirit from his church in this new state of things, it was revived under the dispensation of the gospel, according to that famous prophecy of Joel, exactly accomplished (as Peter told the Jews) upon the day of pentecost, when the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost were so plentifully shed upon the apostles and primitive Christians: 'This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel: It shall come to pass in the last days, (saith God,) I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.'<sup>1</sup> It lay in general in revealing and making known to others the mind of God; but discovered itself in particular instances, partly in foretelling things to come, and what should certainly happen in after times: a thing set beyond the reach of any finite understanding; for though such effects as depend upon natural agents, or moral and political causes, may be foreseen by studious and considering persons; yet the knowledge of futurities, things purely contingent, that merely depend upon men's choice, and their mutable and uncertain wills, can only fall under his view who at once beholds things past, present, and to come. Now this was conferred upon the apostles and some of the first Chris-

<sup>1</sup> Joel, ii. 28, 29; Acts, ii. 16, 17, 18.



tians, as appears from many instances in the history of the apostolic acts; and we find the apostles' writings frequently interspersed with prophetic predictions concerning the great apostacy from the faith, the universal corruption and degeneracy of manners, the rise of particular heresies, the coming of antichrist, and several other things, which the Spirit said expressly should come to pass in the latter times: besides, that St. John's whole book of Revelation is almost entirely made up of prophecies concerning the future state and condition of the church. Sometimes by this spirit of prophecy God declared things that were of present concernment to the exigencies of the church, as when he signified to them that they should set apart Paul and Barnabas for the conversion of the Gentiles, and many times immediately designed particular persons to be pastors and governors of the church. Thus we read of 'the gift' that was given to Timothy 'by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery;' that is, his ordination, to which he was particularly pointed out by some prophetic designation. But the main use of this prophetic gift in those times was, to explain some of the more difficult and particular parts of the Christian doctrine, especially to expound and apply the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah and his kingdom, in their public assemblies; whence the 'gift of prophecy'<sup>1</sup> is explained 'by understanding all mysteries and all knowledge;' that is, the most dark and difficult places of Scripture, the types and figures, the ceremonies and prophecies of the Old Testament. And thus we

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

are commonly to understand those words, 'prophets' and 'prophesying,' that so familiarly occur in the New Testament. 'Having gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;' that is, expound Scripture according to the generally received principles of faith and life. So the apostle elsewhere, prescribing rules for the decent and orderly managing of divine worship in their public assemblies: 'Let the prophets,' says he, 'speak two or three,' that is, at the same assembly, 'and let the other judge;' and if, while any is thus expounding, another has a divine afflatus, whereby he is more particularly enabled to explain some difficult and emergent passage, 'let the first hold his peace; for ye may all' that have this gift, 'prophesy one by one;' that so, thus orderly proceeding, 'all may learn, and all may be comforted.'<sup>1</sup> Nor can the first pretend, that this interruption is an unseasonable check to his revelation, seeing he may command himself; for though among the Gentiles the prophetic and ecstatic impulse did so violently press upon the inspired person that he could not govern himself, yet in the church of God 'the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets,' may be so ruled and restrained by them as to make way for others. This order of Christian prophets, considered as a distinct ministry by itself, is constantly placed next to the apostolical office, and is frequently, by St. Paul, preferred before any other spiritual gifts then bestowed upon the church. When this spirit of prophecy ceased in the Christian church we cannot certainly

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 29—31.

find. It continued some competent time beyond the apostolic age. Justin Martyr,<sup>1</sup> expressly tells Trypho, the Jew : Παρὰ ἡμῖν ἐ, μέχρι νῦν προφητικὰ χαρίσματα, "the gifts of prophecy are even yet extant among us:" an argument, as he there tells him, that those things which had of old been the great privileges of their church, were now translated into the Christian church. And Eusebius,<sup>2</sup> speaking of a revelation made to one Alcibiades, who lived about the time of Irenæus, adds, that the divine grace had not withdrawn its presence from the church, but that they still had the Holy Ghost as their counsellor to direct them.

11. Secondly, they had 'the gift of discerning spirits,' whereby they were enabled to discover the truth or falsehood of men's pretences, whether their gifts were real or counterfeit, and their persons truly inspired or not. For many men, actuated only by diabolical impulses, might entitle themselves to divine inspirations, and others might be imposed upon by their illusions, and mistake their dreams and fancies for the Spirit's dictates and revelations; or might so subtilly and artificially counterfeit revelations, that they might with most pass for current, especially in those times when these supernatural gifts were so common and ordinary; and our Lord himself had frequently told them, that false prophets would arise, and that many would confidently plead for themselves before him, that they had 'propheesied in his name.' That therefore the church might not be imposed on, God was pleased to endue the apostles, and it may

<sup>1</sup> Dial. cum. Tryph. p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. v. c. 3, p. 168.

be some others, with an immediate faculty of discerning the chaff from the wheat, true from false prophets; nay, to know when the true prophets delivered the revelations of the Spirit, and when they expressed only their own conceptions. This was a mighty privilege, but yet seems to me to have extended further, to judge of the sincerity or hypocrisy of men's hearts in the profession of religion; that so bad men being discovered, suitable censures and punishments might be passed upon them, and others cautioned to avoid them. Thus Peter, at first sight, discovered Ananias and Sapphira, and the rotten hypocrisy of their intentions, before there was any external evidence in the case; and told Simon Magus, though baptized before, upon his embracing Christianity, 'that his heart was not right in the sight of God; for I perceive,' says he, 'that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.'<sup>1</sup> Thirdly; the apostles had the gift of tongues, furnished with variety of utterance, able to speak on a sudden several languages which they had never learnt, as occasion was administered, and the exigencies of persons and nations, with whom they conversed, did require. For the apostles being principally designed to convert the world, and to plant Christianity in all countries and nations, it was absolutely necessary that they should be able readily to express their minds in the languages of those countries to which they addressed themselves; seeing otherwise it would have been a work of time and difficulty, and not consistent with the term of the apostles' lives, had they been first to learn the different languages of

<sup>1</sup> Acts, viii. 21—23.

those nations before they could have preached the gospel to them. Hence this gift was diffused upon the apostles in larger measure and proportion than upon other men: 'I speak with tongues more than ye all,' says St. Paul; that is, than all the gifted persons in the church of Corinth. Our Lord had told the apostles, before his departure from them, 'that they should be endued with power from on high;' which, upon the day of Pentecost, was particularly made good in this instance; when in a moment they were enabled to speak almost all the languages of the then known world, and this as a specimen and first-fruits of the rest of those miraculous powers that were conferred upon them.

12. A fourth gift was that of interpretation, or unfolding to others what had been delivered in an unknown tongue. For the Christian assemblies in those days were frequently made up of men of different nations, and who could not understand what the apostles, or others, had spoken to the congregation; this God supplied by this gift of interpretation, enabling some to interpret what others did not understand, and to speak it to them in their own native language. St. Paul<sup>1</sup> largely discourses the necessity of this gift, in order to the instructing and edifying of the church, seeing without it their meetings could be no better than the assembly of Babel after the confusion of languages, where one man must needs be a barbarian to another; and all the praying and preaching of the minister of the assembly be to many altogether fruitless and unprofitable, and no better than a speaking into the air. What is the speaking, though with the

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 18.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiv.

tongue of angels, to them that do not understand it? How can the idiot and unlearned say amen, who understand not the language of him that giveth thanks? The duty may be done with admirable quaintness and accuracy; but what is he the better, from whom it is locked up in an unknown tongue? A consideration that made the apostle solemnly profess, that 'he had rather speak five words in the church with his understanding, than by his voice he might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.'<sup>1</sup> Therefore 'if any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be but by two, or at most by three, and let one interpret' what the rest have spoken; 'but if there be no interpreter,' none present able to do this, 'let him keep silence in the church, and speak to himself and to God.'<sup>2</sup> A man that impartially reads this discourse of the apostle, may wonder how the church of Rome, in defiance of it, can so openly practise, so confidently defend their Bible and divine services in an unknown tongue; so flatly repugnant to the dictates of common reason, the usage of the first Christian church, and these plain apostolical commands. But this is not the only instance wherein that church has departed both from Scripture, reason, and the practice of the first and purest ages of Christianity. Indeed there is some cause why they are so zealous to keep both Scripture and their divine worship in a strange language; lest by reading the one the people should become wise enough to discover the gross errors and corruptions of the other. Fifthly; the apostles had the gift of healing, of curing diseases

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 9.<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ver. 27, 28.

without the arts of physic; the most inveterate distempers being equally removable by an almighty power, and vanishing at their speaking of a word. This begot an extraordinary veneration for them and their religion among the common sort of men, who, as they are strongest moved with sensible effects, so are most taken with those miracles that are beneficial to the life of man. Hence the infinite cures done in every place; God mercifully providing that the body should partake with the soul in the advantages of the gospel, the cure of the one ushering in, many times, the conversion of the other. This gift was very common in those early days, bestowed not upon the apostles only, but upon the ordinary governors of the church, who were wont 'to lay their hands upon the sick,' and sometimes 'to anoint them with oil,' (a symbolic rite in use among the Jews, to denote the grace of God,) and 'to pray over,' and for 'them in the name of the Lord Jesus;'<sup>1</sup> whereby, upon a hearty confession and forsaking of their sins, both health and pardon were at once bestowed upon them. How long this gift, with its appendant ceremony of unction, lasted in the church is not easy to determine: that it was in use in Tertullian's time,<sup>2</sup> we learn from the instance he gives us of Proculus, a Christian, who cured the emperor Severus, by anointing him with oil; for which the emperor had him in great honour, and kept him with him at court all his life; it afterwards vanishing by degrees, as all other miraculous powers, as Christianity gained firm footing in the world. As for extreme unction, so generally maintained and practised in the church

<sup>1</sup> James, v. 14, 15, 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ad Scapul. c. iv. p. 71.

of Rome, and by them made a sacrament, I doubt it will receive very little countenance from this primitive usage. Indeed, could they as easily restore sick men to health as they can anoint them with oil, I think nobody would contradict them; but till they can pretend to the one I think it unreasonable they should use the other. The best is, though founding it upon this apostolical practice, they have turned it to a quite contrary purpose; instead of recovering men to life and health, to dispose and fit them for dying when all hopes of life are taken from them.

13. Sixthly; the apostles were invested with a power of immediately inflicting corporal punishments upon great and notorious sinners; and this, probably, is that which he means by his *ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων*, 'operations of powers,' or 'working miracles;'<sup>1</sup> which surely cannot be meant of miracles in general, being reckoned up amongst the particular gifts of the Holy Ghost; nor is there any other to which it can with equal probability refer. A power to inflict diseases upon the body, as when St. Paul struck Elymas, the sorcerer, with blindness; and sometimes extending to the loss of life itself, as in the sad instance of Ananias and Sapphira. This was the *virga apostolica*, the rod (mentioned by St. Paul) which the apostles held and shook over scandalous and insolent offenders, and sometimes laid upon them: 'What will ye? shall I come to you with a rod, or in love, and the spirit of meekness?'<sup>2</sup> Where observe, says Chrysostom,<sup>3</sup> how the apostle tempers his dis-

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. iv. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Πολὸν καὶ τὸ φοβερόν ἔχει καὶ τὸ προσηγνὲς ὁ λόγος οὗτος· τὸ μὲν γὰρ εἰπεῖν, ὅτι γινώσσομαι, ἔτι ὑπεσαλμένῃ ἦν. τὸ



course: the love and meekness, and his desire to know, argued care and kindness; but the rod spake dread and terror; a rod of severity and punishment, and which sometimes mortally chastised the offender. Elsewhere, he frequently gives intimations of this power, when he was to deal with stubborn and incorrigible persons: 'Having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled; for though I should boast somewhat more of our authority (which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction) I should not be ashamed; that I may not seem as if I would terrify you by letters.'<sup>1</sup> And he again puts them in mind of it at the close of his epistle: 'I told you before, and foretel you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all others, that if I come again I will not spare.'<sup>2</sup> But he hoped these smart warnings would supersede all further severity against them: 'Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction.'<sup>3</sup> Of this nature was the 'delivering over persons unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh,' the chastising the body by some present pain or sickness,

δὲ εἰπεῖν, τί θέλετε; ἐν ῥάβδῳ ἔλθω πρὸς ὑμᾶς· ἐπὶ τὸν διδασκαλικὸν λοιπὸν ἀναβαίνοντος θρόνον, κακεῖθεν αὐτοῖς διαλεγόμενος, ὡς τὴν ἐξουσίαν ἀναλαβόντος πᾶσαν. Τί ἐστίν, ἐν ῥάβδῳ, ἐν κολάσει, ἐν τιμωρίᾳ, ταῦτά ἐστιν, ἀνελὼ πηρώσω· ὑπὲρ ἐπὶ τῆς Σαπφείρας ὁ Πέτρος ἐποίησεν. ὑπὲρ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ Ελὺμα τοῦ μάγε. — Chrysost. Hom. 14, ad Corinth. p. 444. vid. Hieron. in loc. tom. ix. p. 305.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. x. 6, 8, 9.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xiii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. ver. 10.

‘ that the spirit might be saved,’<sup>1</sup> by being brought to a seasonable repentance. Thus he dealt with Hymenæus and Alexander, who had ‘ made shipwreck of faith and a good conscience;’ he delivered them unto Satan, ‘ that they might learn not to blaspheme.’<sup>2</sup> Nothing being more usual in those times, than for persons excommunicate, and cut off from the body of the church, to be presently arrested by Satan, as the common-serjeant and executioner, and by him either actually possessed, or tormented in their bodies by some diseases which he brought upon them. And indeed this severe discipline was no more than necessary in those times, when Christianity was wholly destitute of any civil or coercive power, to beget and keep up a due reverence and regard to the sentences and determinations of the church, and to secure the laws of religion and the holy censures from being slighted by every bold and contumacious offender. And this effect we find it had after the dreadful instance of Ananias and Sapphira; ‘ Great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.’<sup>3</sup> To what has been said concerning these apostolical gifts, let me further observe, that they had not only these gifts residing in themselves, but a power to bestow them upon others; so that by imposition of hands, or upon hearing and embracing the apostles’ doctrine, and being baptized into the Christian faith, they could confer these miraculous powers upon persons thus qualified to receive them, whereby they were in a moment enabled to speak divers languages, to prophesy, to interpret, and do other

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. v. 5, vid. Chrysost. et Hieron. in loc.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. i. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Acts, v. 11.

miracles, to the admiration and astonishment of all that heard and saw them. A privilege peculiar to the apostles; for we do not find that any inferior order of gifted persons were intrusted with it. And therefore, as Chrysostom<sup>1</sup> well observes, though Philip, the deacon, wrought great miracles at Samaria, to the conversion of many; yea, to the conviction of Simon Magus himself, ‘yet the Holy Ghost fell upon none of them, only they were baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus;’ till Peter and John came down to them, who having ‘prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Ghost, they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost.’ Which when the magician beheld, he offered the apostles money to enable him, that on whomsoever he laid his hands, he might derive these miraculous powers upon them.

14. Having seen how fitly furnished the apostles were for the execution of their office, let us in the last place inquire into its duration and continuance. And here it must be considered, that in the apostolical office there was something extraordinary, and something ordinary. What was extraordinary was their immediate commission derived from the mouth of Christ himself; their unlimited charge to preach the gospel up and down the world, without being tied to any particular places; the supernatural and miraculous powers conferred

<sup>1</sup> Διὰ τί οὐκ ἦσαν οὗτοι λαβόντες πνεῦμα ἅγιον βαπτισθέντες; ἦτοι τῷ μὴ ἔχειν (Φίλιππον) χάρισμα τοιοῦτον· τῶν γὰρ ἐπτά ἦν· διὸ καὶ βαπτίζων πνεῦμα τοῖς βαπτιζομένοις οὐκ ἐδίδε· οὐδὲ γὰρ εἶχεν ἐξουσίαν· τοῦτο γὰρ τὸ δῶρον μόνων τῶν δώδεκα ἦν· δύναμιν μὲν ἔλαβον (οἱ Διάκονοι) ποιεῖν σημεῖα· οὐχὶ δὲ καὶ πνεῦμα διδόναι ἑτέροις. ἄρα τοῦτο ἦν τῶν ἀποστόλων ἐξαιρετον· ὅθεν καὶ τοὺς κορυφαίους, οὐκ ἄλλους τινάς, ἐστὶν ἰδεῖν τοῦτο ποιοῦντας.—Chrysost. Homil. 18, in Act. Ap. p. 580.

upon them as apostles ; their infallible guidance in delivering the doctrines of the gospel ; and these all expired and determined with their persons. The standing and perpetual part of it, was to teach and instruct the people in the duties and principles of religion, to administer the sacraments, to constitute guides and officers, and to exercise the discipline and government of the church ; and in these they are succeeded by the ordinary rulers and ecclesiastic guides, who were to superintend and discharge the affairs and offices of the church to the end of the world. Whence it is that bishops and governors came to be styled apostles, as being their successors in ordinary ; for so they frequently are in the writings of the church. Thus Timothy, who was bishop of Ephesus, is called an apostle ;<sup>1</sup> Clemens of Rome, Clemens the apostle ;<sup>2</sup> St. Mark, bishop of Alexandria, by Eusebius, styled both an apostle and evangelist ;<sup>3</sup> Ignatius, a bishop and apostle.<sup>4</sup> A title that continued in after ages, especially given to those that were the first planters or restorers of Christianity in any country. In the Coptic calendar, published by Mr. Selden,<sup>5</sup> the seventh day of the month Baschnes, answering to our second of May, is dedicated to the memory of St. Athanasius the apostle. Acacius and Paulus, in their letter to Epiphanius,<sup>6</sup> style him *νέον ἀπόστολον ἐ κήρυκα*, “ a new apostle and preacher :” and

<sup>1</sup> Philostorg. Hist. Eccles. l. iii. c. 2, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Clem. Alexand. Strom. lib. iv. p. 516.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 24, p. 66.

<sup>4</sup> Chrysost. Encom. S. Ignat. p. 499, tom. i.

<sup>5</sup> De Synedr. lib. iii. c. 15, p. 398.

<sup>6</sup> Præfix. Oper. de Hæres. p. 1.

Sidonius Apollinaris<sup>1</sup> writing to Lupus, bishop of Troyes, in France, speaks of "the honour due to his eminent apostleship." An observation which it were easy enough to confirm by abundant instances, were it either doubtful in itself or necessary to my purpose; but being neither, I forbear.

<sup>1</sup> Lib. vi. Ep. 4. p. 147; vid. Ep. 7. p. 150.

## ST. PETER.

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### SECTION I.

*Of St. Peter, from his Birth till his first coming to Christ.*

THE land of Palestine was, at and before the coming of our blessed Saviour, distinguished into three several provinces, Judæa, Samaria, and Galilee. This last was divided into the upper and the lower. In the upper, called also Galilee of the Gentiles, within the division anciently belonging to the tribe of Naphthali, stood Bethsaida, formerly an obscure and inconsiderable village, till lately re-edified and enlarged by Philip the tetrarch,<sup>1</sup> by him advanced to the place and title of a city, replenished with inhabitants, and fortified with power and strength; and in honour of Julia, the daughter of Augustus Cæsar, by him styled Julias. Situate it was upon the banks of the sea of Galilee, and had a wilderness on the other side, thence called the desert of Bethsaida, whither our Saviour used often to retire; the privacies and solitudes of the place advantage-

<sup>1</sup> Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. c. 3, p. 618; Matt. xi. 21.

ously ministering to divine contemplation. But Bethsaida was not so remarkable for this adjoining wilderness as itself was memorable for a worse sort of barrenness—ingratitude, and unprofitableness under the influences of Christ's sermons and miracles; thence severely upbraided by him, and threatened with one of his deepest woes: 'Wo unto thee Chorazin, wo unto thee Bethsaida,' &c.<sup>1</sup> A wo that it seems stuck close to it; for whatever it was at this time, one who surveyed it in the last age tells us, that it was shrunk again into a very mean and small village, consisting only of a few cottages of Moors and wild Arabs;<sup>2</sup> and later travellers have since assured us, that even these are dwindled away into one poor cottage at this day. So fatally does sin undermine the greatest, the goodliest places; so certainly does God's word take place, and not one iota either of his promises or threatenings fall to the ground. Next to the honour that was done it by our Saviour's presence, who living most in these parts frequently resorted hither, it had nothing greater to recommend it to the notice of posterity, than that (besides some other of the apostles) it was the birth-place of St Peter; a person how inconsiderable soever in his private fortunes, yet of great note and eminency as one of the prime ambassadors of the Son of God, to whom both sacred and ecclesiastical stories give, though not a superiority, a precedency in the college of apostles.

2. The particular time of his birth cannot be recovered, no probable footsteps or intimations being

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xi. 21.

<sup>2</sup> J. Cotovic. Itiner. Hierosol. lib. iii. c. 8, p. 358.

left of it: in the general we may conclude him at least ten years older than his Master; his married condition and settled course of life at his first coming to Christ, and that authority and respect which the gravity of his person procured him amongst the rest of the apostles, can speak him no less; but for any thing more particular and positive in this matter I see no reason to affirm. Indeed, might we trust the account, which one (who pretends to calculate his nativity with ostentation enough) has given of it, we are told that he was born three years before the blessed virgin, and just seventeen before the incarnation of our Saviour. But let us view his account.<sup>1</sup>

Nat. est {	ab orbe cond. à diluvio U. C.	}	AN. 4034 2378 734	{	Octav. August. à 1 <sup>o</sup> ejus consul à pugna Actiac.	}	AN. 8 24 12	{	Herodis reg. ante b. virg. ante Chr. nat	}	AN. 30 3 17

When I met with such a pompous train of epochas, the least I expected was truth and certainty. This computation he grounds upon the date of St. Peter's death, placed (as elsewhere he tells us<sup>2</sup>) by Bellarmine in the eighty-sixth year of his age; so that recounting from the year of Christ sixty-nine, when Peter is commonly said to have suffered, he runs up his age to his birth, and spreads it out into so many several dates. But alas, all is built upon a sandy bottom. For besides his mistake about the year of the world, few of his dates hold due correspondence. But the worst of it is, that after all this, Bellarmine<sup>3</sup> (upon whose single testimony all this fine fabric is erected) says no such thing, but only supposes, merely for argument's

<sup>1</sup> Stengel, de S. Petro. c. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. c. 49.

<sup>3</sup> Bellarm. de Rom. Pontif. lib. ii. c. 9, col. 624.



sake, that St. Peter might very well be eighty-six (it is erroneously printed seventy-six) years old at the time of his martyrdom. So far will confidence, or ignorance, or both, carry men aside; if it could be a mistake, and not rather a bold imposing upon the world. But of this enough, and perhaps more than it deserves.

3. Being circumcised according to the rites of the Mosaic law, the name given him at his circumcision was Simon, or Symeon; a name common amongst the Jews, especially in their later times. This was afterwards by our Saviour not abolished, but additioned with the title of Cephas, which in Syriac (the vulgar language of the Jews at that time) signifying a stone, or rock, was thence derived into the Greek, Πέτρος, and by us, Peter: so far was Hesychius<sup>1</sup> out, when rendering Πέτρος by ὁ ἐπιλύων, an expounder or interpreter; probably deriving it from רמ which signifies, to explain and interpret. By this new imposition our Lord seemed to denote the firmness and constancy of his faith, and his vigorous activity in building up the church, as a spiritual house upon the true rock, the living and corner-stone, chosen of God, and precious, as St. Peter himself expresses it.<sup>2</sup> Nor can our Saviour be understood to have hereby conferred upon him any peculiar supremacy or sovereignty above, much less over the rest of the apostles; for in respect of the great trust committed to them, and their being sent to plant Christianity in the world, they are all equally styled foundations.<sup>3</sup> Nor is it accountable either to Scripture or reason to suppose

<sup>1</sup> Πέτρος, ἐπιλύων, ἐπιγινώσκων· οὗτος ἔ· Σίμων, ἔ· Κηφᾶς ἔ· Συμεὼν ἐλέγετο.—Hesych. in voc. Πέτρος.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. xxi. 14.

that by this name our Lord should design the person of Peter to be that very rock upon which his church was to be built. In a fond imitation<sup>1</sup> of this new name given to St. Peter, those who pretend to be his successors in the see of Rome, usually lay by their own, and assume a new name upon their advancement to the apostolic chair; it being one of the first questions<sup>2</sup> which the cardinals put to the new elected pope, "by what name he will please to be called." This custom first began about the year 844, when Peter di Bocca-porco (or Swine's-mouth) being chosen pope, changed his name into Sergius the second: probably not so much to avoid the uncomeliness of his own name, as if unbefitting the dignity of his place, (for this being but his paternal name, would after have been no part of his pontifical style and title,) as out of a mighty reverence to St. Peter, accounting himself not worthy to bear his name, though it was his own baptismal name. Certain it is, that none of the bishops of that see ever assumed St. Peter's name; and some who have had it as their Christian name before, have laid it aside upon their election to the papacy. But to return to our apostle.

4. His father was Jonah, probably a fisherman of Bethsaida, for the sacred story takes no farther notice of him than by the bare mention of his name; and I believe there had been no great danger of mistake, though Metaphrastes<sup>3</sup> had not told us that it was not Jonas the prophet, who came out of the belly of the whale. Brother he was to

<sup>1</sup> Pap. Masson. de Episc. Urb. in Serg. iv. fol. 172, p. 2, ex Annal. Vict.

<sup>2</sup> Sac. Cerem. Eccles. Rom. sect. 1. fol. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Com. de Petr. et Paul. apud Sur. ad diem 29 Jun.

St. Andrew the apostle, and some question there is amongst the ancients, which was the elder brother. Epiphanius<sup>1</sup> (probably from some tradition current in his time) clearly adjudges it to St. Andrew, herein universally followed by those of the church of Rome, that the precedence given to St. Peter may not seem to be put upon the account of his seniority. But to him we may oppose the authority of St. Chrysostom,<sup>2</sup> a person equal both in time and credit, who expressly says, that though Andrew came later into life than Peter, yet he first brought him to the knowledge of the gospel; which Baronius, against all pretence of reason, would understand of his entering into eternal life. Besides, St. Jerome,<sup>3</sup> Cassian,<sup>4</sup> Bede,<sup>5</sup> and others, are for St. Peter being the elder brother; expressly ascribing it to his age, that he, rather than any other, was president of the college of apostles. However it was, it sounds not a little to the honour of their father, (as of Zebedee also in the like case,) that of but twelve apostles two of his sons were taken into the number. In his youth he was brought up to fishing, which we may guess to have been the staple trade of Bethsaida, (which hence probably borrowed its name, signifying an house, or habitation of fishing; though others render it by hunting, the word  $\pi\rho$  equally being either,) much advantaged herein by the neighbourhood of the lake of Genesareth, (on whose banks it stood,) called

<sup>1</sup> Hæres. 51, p. 192.

<sup>2</sup> Serm. de S. Andr. quem recitat Metaphrast. ap. Sur. seu potius Lippoman. tom. vi.; vide Baron. not. ad Martyrol. Novemb. 30, p. 737.

<sup>3</sup> Hieron. lib. i. adv. Jovin. p. 35, tom. ii.

<sup>4</sup> Cassian. de Incarn. Dom. lib. iii. c. 12, p. 996.

<sup>5</sup> Bed. Comment. in cap. 1; Joan. tom. v.

also the sea of Galilee, and the sea of Tiberias, according to the mode of the Hebrew language, wherein all greater confluences of waters are called seas. Of this lake the Jews have a saying, that "of all the seven seas which God created, he made choice of none but the sea of Genesareth;"<sup>1</sup> which, however intended by them, is true only in this respect, that our blessed Saviour made choice of it, to honour it with the frequency of his presence, and the power of his miraculous operations. In length it was an hundred furlongs, and about forty over; the water of it pure and clear, sweet and most fit to drink; stored it was with several sorts of fish, and those different both in kind and taste from those in other places.<sup>2</sup> Here it was that Peter closely followed the exercise of his calling; from whence it seems he afterwards removed to Capernaum, (probably upon his marriage, at least frequently resided there,) for there we meet with his house, and there we find him paying tribute; a house, over which, Nicephorus<sup>3</sup> tells us, that Helen, the mother of Constantine, erected a beautiful church to the honour of St. Peter. This place was equally advantageous for the managery of his trade, standing upon the influx of Jordan into the sea of Galilee, and where he might as well reap the fruits of an honest and industrious diligence. A mean, I confess it was, and a more servile course of life, as which, besides the great pains and labour it required, exposed him to all the injuries of wind

<sup>1</sup> Midr. Tillin. fol. 41, ap. Lightf. Cent. Chorograph. in Matt. c. 70, p. 131.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph. de Bell. Jud. l. iii. cæp. 16. p. 860; Matt. viii. 14; xvii. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. Eccles. lib. viii. c. 30, p. 596.

and weather, to the storms of the sea, the darkness and tempestuousness of the night, and all to make a very small return. An employment whose restless troubles, constant hardships, frequent dangers, and amazing horrors, have been described by many authors.<sup>1</sup> But meanness is no bar in God's way; the poor, if virtuous, are as dear to heaven as the wealthy and honourable; equally alike to him with whom 'there is no respect of persons.'

Nay, our Lord seemed to cast a peculiar honour upon this profession, when afterwards calling him and some others of the same trade from catching of fish, to be (as he told them) 'fishers of men.'

5. And here we may justly reflect upon the wise and admirable methods of the Divine Providence, which in planting and propagating the Christian religion in the world, made choice of such mean and unlikely instruments; that he should hide these things from the wise and prudent, and reveal them unto babes, men that had not been educated in the academy and the schools of learning, but brought up to a trade, to catch fish and mend nets; most of the apostles being taken from the meanest trades, and all of them (St. Paul excepted) unfurnished of all arts of learning, and the advantages of liberal and ingenuous education; and yet these were the men that were designed to run down the world, and to overturn the learning of the prudent. Certainly, had human wisdom been to manage the business, it would have taken quite other measures, and chosen out the profoundest rabbins, the acutest philosophers, the smoothest orators, such as would

<sup>1</sup> See particularly Oppian. Ἀλιευτ. Βιβλ. α. non longe ab init. The Emperor Antoninus gave a piece of gold for every verse in the description here referred to.—En.

have been most likely, by strength of reason and arts of rhetoric, to have triumphed over the minds of men, to grapple with the stubbornness of the Jews, and baffle the finer notions and speculations of the Greeks. We find that those sects of philosophy that gained most credit in the heathen world, did it this way, by their eminency in some arts and sciences, whereby they recommended themselves to the acceptance of the wiser and more ingenious part of mankind. Julian the apostate<sup>1</sup> thinks it a reasonable exception against the Jewish prophets, that they were incompetent messengers and interpreters of the divine will, because they had not their minds cleared and purged, by passing through the circle of polite arts and learning. Why, now this is the wonder of it, that the first preachers of the gospel should be such rude, unlearned men, and yet so suddenly, so powerfully prevail over the learned world, and conquer so many who had the greatest parts and abilities, and the strongest prejudices against it, by the simplicity of the gospel. When Celsus objected, that the apostles were but a company of mean and illiterate persons, sorry mariners and fishermen, Origen<sup>2</sup> quickly returns upon him with this answer: "That hence it was plainly evident, that they taught Christianity by a divine power, when such persons were able with such an uncontrolled success to subdue men to the obedience of his word; for that they had no eloquent tongues, no subtile and discursive head,

<sup>1</sup> Οὐδὲν δὲ, οἶμαι, κωλύει τὸν μὲν θεὸν εἶναι μέγαν, οὐ μὴ σπεδαίων Προφητῶν, οὐδὲ ἐξηγητῶν τυχεῖν αἰτίων δὲ ὅτι τὴν ἑαυτῶν ψυχὴν οὐ παρέχον ἀποκαθάραι τοῖς ἐγκυκλίους μαθήμασιν.—Fragm. Epist. p. 541, tom. i.

<sup>2</sup> Contr. Cels. lib. i. p. 47, 48.

none of the refined and rhetorical arts of Greece, to conquer the minds of men. For my part," says he,<sup>1</sup> in another place, "I verily believe that the holy Jesus purposely made use of such preachers of his doctrine, that there might be no suspicion that they came instructed with arts of sophistry, but that it might be clearly manifest to all the world that there was no crafty design in it, and that they had a divine power going along with them, which was more efficacious than the greatest volubility of expression, or ornaments of speech, or the artifices which were used in the Grecian compositions. Had it not been for this divine power that upheld it," as he elsewhere argues,<sup>2</sup> "the Christian religion must needs have sunk under those weighty pressures that lay upon it, having not only to contend with the potent opposition of the senate, emperors, people, and the whole power of the Roman empire, but to conflict with those home-bred wants and necessities wherewith its own professors were oppressed and burthened."

6. It could not but greatly vindicate the apostles from all suspicion of forgery and imposture, in the thoughts of sober and unbiassed persons, to see their doctrine readily entertained by men of the most discerning and inquisitive minds. Had they dealt only with the rude and the simple, the idiot and the unlearned, there might have been some pretence to suspect that they lay in wait to deceive, and designed to impose upon the world by crafty and insinulative arts and methods. But, alas, they had other persons to deal with, men of the acutest wits and most profound abilities, the wisest philosophers

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iii. p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. i. p. 6.

and most subtle disputants, able to weigh an argument with the greatest accuracy, and to decline the force of the strongest reasonings; and who had their parts edged with the keenest prejudices of education, and a mighty veneration for the religion of their country; a religion that for so many ages had governed the world, and taken firm possession of the minds of men. And yet, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, these plain men conquered the wise and the learned, and brought them over to that doctrine that was despised and scorned, opposed and persecuted, and that had nothing but its own native excellency to recommend it. A clear evidence that there was something in it beyond the craft and power of men. "Is not this," says an elegant apologist,<sup>1</sup> making his address to the heathens, "enough to make you believe and entertain it, to consider that in so short a time it has diffused itself over the whole world, civilized the most barbarous nations, softened the roughest and most intractable tempers; that the greatest wits and scholars, orators, grammarians, rhetoricians, lawyers, physicians, and philosophers have quitted their formerly dear and beloved sentiments, and heartily embraced the precepts and doctrines of the gospel?" Upon this account, Theodoret<sup>2</sup> does with no less truth than elegance, insult and triumph over the

<sup>1</sup> Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. ii. p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> De Curand. Græc. Affect. Serm. ix. de Leg. p. 123.

Theodoret, who was one of the earliest and most learned historians of the church, lived in the former part of the fifth century. His commentaries on various parts of Scripture display great knowledge and piety; but he suffered much from the factious spirit of his age: and in the disputes respecting Nestorius, was threatened with the loss of the episcopal rank, to which he had been justly elevated for his virtues.—ED.



heathens. He tells them, that whoever would be at the pains to compare the best law-makers, either amongst the Greeks or Romans, with our fishermen and publicans, would soon perceive what a divine virtue and efficacy there was in them above all others, whereby they did not only conquer their neighbours, not only the Greeks and Romans, but brought over the most barbarous nations to a compliance with the law of the gospel; and that not by force of arms, not by numerous bands of soldiers, not by methods of torture and cruelty, but by meek persuasives, and a convincing the world of the excellency and usefulness of those laws which they propounded to them.<sup>1</sup> A thing which the wisest and best men of the heathen world could never do, to make their *dogmata* and institutions universally obtain; nay, that Plato himself could never, by all his plausible and insinuating arts, make his laws to be entertained by his own dear Athenians.<sup>2</sup> He further shows them, that the laws published by our fishermen and tent-makers, could never be abolished (like those made by the best amongst them) by the policies of Caius, the power of Claudius, the cruelties of Nero, or any of the succeeding emperors;<sup>3</sup> but still they went on conquering and to conquer, and made millions both of men and women willing to embrace flames, and to encounter death in its most horrid shapes, rather than disown and forsake them;<sup>4</sup> whereof he calls to witness those many churches and monuments every where erected to the memory of Christian martyrs, no less to the honour than advantage of those

<sup>1</sup> De Curand. Græc. Affect. Serm. ix. de Leg. p. 125.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 128.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. p. 135.

cities and countries, and in some sense to all mankind.

7. The sum of the discourse is, in the apostle's words, that 'God chose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, the weak to confound those that are mighty, the base things of the world, things most vilified and despised, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are,'<sup>1</sup> These were the things, these the persons whom God sent upon this errand, to silence 'the wise, the scribe, and the disputer of this world, and to make foolish the wisdom of this world.' For though 'the Jews required a sign, and the Greeks sought after wisdom, though the preaching a crucified Saviour was a scandal to the Jews, and foolishness to the learned 'Grecians;' yet, 'by this foolishness of preaching, God was pleased to save them that believed;' and in the event made it appear, that 'the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God stronger than men.'<sup>2</sup> That so the honour of all might entirely redound to himself; so the apostle concludes, 'that no flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth, should glory in the Lord.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. i. 27, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Ver. 20—25.

<sup>3</sup> "Isti primi vocati sunt, ut Dominum sequerentur: piscatores et illiterati mittuntur ad prædicandum, ne fides credentium non virtute Dei, sed eloquentia atque doctrina fieri putaretur."—Hieron. Comm. in Matth. c. 4, tom. ix. p. 17.

## SECTION II.

*Of St. Peter, from his first coming to Christ till his being called to be a Disciple.*

THOUGH we find not whether Peter, before his coming to Christ, was engaged in any of the particular sects at this time in the Jewish church, yet is it greatly probable that he was one of the disciples to John the Baptist. For first, it is certain that his brother Andrew was so; and we can hardly think these two brothers should draw contrary ways, or that he who was so ready to bring his brother the early tidings of the Messiah, that the 'sun of righteousness' was already risen in those parts, should not be as solicitous to bring him under the discipline and influences of John the Baptist, the 'day-star' that went before him. Secondly; Peter's forwardness and curiosity at the first news of Christ's appearing, to come to him and converse with him, show that his expectations had been awakened, and some light in this matter conveyed to him by the preaching and ministry of John, who was 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight;' showing them who it was that was coming after him.

2. His first acquaintance with Christ commenced in this manner. The blessed Jesus having for thirty years passed through the solitudes of a private life, had lately been baptized in Jordan, and there publicly owned to be the Son of God, by the most solemn attestations that heaven could give him;

whereupon he was immediately hurried into the wilderness, to a personal contest with the devil for forty days together. So natural is it to the enemy of mankind to malign our happiness, and to seek to blast our joys, when we are under the highest instances of the divine grace and favour. His enemy being conquered in three set battles, and fled, he returned hence, and came down to Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing his proselytes, and endeavouring to satisfy the Jews, who had sent to him curiously to inquire concerning this new Messiah that appeared among them. Upon the great testimony which the Baptist gave him, and his pointing to our Lord then passing by him, two of John's disciples,<sup>1</sup> who were then with him, presently followed after Christ, one of which was Andrew, Simon's brother. It was towards evening when they came, and therefore probably they staid with him all night, during which Andrew had opportunity to inform himself, and to satisfy his most scrupulous inquiries. Early the next morning, (if not that very evening,) he hastened to acquaint his brother Simon with these glad tidings. It is not enough to be good and happy alone; religion is a communicative principle, that, like the circles in the water, delights to multiply itself, and to diffuse its influences round about it, and especially upon those whom nature had placed nearest to us.<sup>2</sup> He tells him, they had found the long-

<sup>1</sup> John, i. 37.

<sup>2</sup> Ἀνδρίας τοῖνον τῷ ζητῶντι περιτυχὼν, ὃ παρ' αὐτῷ μέινας, ὃ μαθὼν ἄπερ ἔμαθε, τὸν θησαυρὸν οὐ κατέχευε παρ' αὐτοῦ, οὐδὲ ὑπέμεινεν εἰ μὴ ὃ τῷ ἀδελφῷ κοινώσεται, ἀλλ' ἐπείγεται ὃ τρέχει ταχέως, μεταδώσων αὐτῷ τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ὧν πεπλούτηκε.—Comment. de S. Andr. in Menæis Græcor. ἡμέρ' λ'. Νόεμερ. sub. lit. π'.

looked for Messiah, him whom Moses and the prophets had so signally foretold, and whom all the devout and pious of that nation had so long expected.

3. Simon, (one of those who 'looked for the kingdom of God, and waited for the redemption of Israel,') ravished with this joyful news, and impatient of delay, presently follows his brother to the place; whither he was no sooner come but our Lord, to give him an evidence of his Divinity, salutes him at first sight by name, tells him what and who he was, both as to his name and kindred, what title should be given him, that he should be called Cephas, or Peter; a name which he afterwards actually conferred upon him.<sup>1</sup> What passed further between them, and whether these two brothers henceforward personally attended our Saviour's motions in the number of his disciples, the sacred story leaves us in the dark. It seems probable that they had staid with him for some time, till they were instructed in the first rudiments of his doctrine, and by his leave departed home. For it is reasonable to suppose, that our Lord being unwilling, at this time especially, to awaken the jealousies of the state by a numerous retinue, might dismiss his disciples for some time, and Peter and Andrew amongst the rest; who hereupon returned home to the exercise of their calling, where he found them afterwards.

4. It was now somewhat more than a year since our Lord, having entered upon the public stage of action, constantly 'went about doing good, healing the sick, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom;'

<sup>1</sup> John, i. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. iv. 23.

residing usually at Capernaum, and the parts about it, where, by the constancy of his preaching, and the reputation of his miracles, his fame spread about all those countries; by means whereof multitudes of people from all parts flocked to him, greedily desirous to become his auditors. And what wonder, if the parched and barren earth thirsted for the showers of heaven? It happened that our Lord retiring out of the city, to enjoy the privacies of contemplation upon the banks of the sea of Galilee, it was not long before the multitude found him out; to avoid the crowd and press whereof he stept into a ship,<sup>1</sup> or fisher-boat, that lay near to the shore, which belonged to Peter (who, together with his companions, after a tedious and unsuccessful night, were gone ashore to wash and dry their nets.) He who might have commanded, was yet pleased to entreat Peter (who by this time was returned into his ship) to put a little from the shore. Here being sat, he taught the people, who stood along upon the shore to hear him. Sermon ended, he resolved to seal up his doctrine with a miracle, that the people might be the more effectually convinced that 'he was a teacher come from God. To this purpose, he bade Simon launch out further, and cast his net into the sea: Simon tells him they had done it already, that they had been fishing all the last night, but in vain; and if they could not succeed then (the most proper season for that employment) there was less hope to speed now, it being probably about noon. But because where God commands it is not for any to argue, but obey, at our Lord's instance he let down the net,

<sup>1</sup> Luke, v. 1.

which immediately enclosed so great a multitude of fishes that the net began to break, and they were forced to call to their partners, who were in a ship hard by them, to come to their assistance. A draught so great that it loaded both their boats, and that so full that it endangered their sinking before they could get safe to shore: an instance wherein our Saviour gave an ocular demonstration that, as Messiah, God had 'put all things under his feet, not only fowls of the air, but the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the sea.'<sup>1</sup>

5. Amazed they were all at this miraculous draught of fishes; whereupon Simon, in an ecstasy of admiration, and a mixture of humility and fear, threw himself at the feet of Christ, and prayed him to depart from him, as a vile and a sinful person. So evident were the appearances of Divinity in this miracle, that he was overpowered and dazzled with its brightness and lustre, and reflecting upon himself, could not but think himself unworthy the presence of so great a person, so immediately sent from God; and considering his own state, (conscience being hereby more sensibly awakened,) was afraid that the divine vengeance might pursue and overtake him. But our Lord, to abate the edge of his fears, assures him that this miracle was not done to amaze and terrify him, but to strengthen and confirm his faith; that now he had nobler work and employment for him; instead of catching fish, he should, by persuading men to the obedience of the gospel, catch the souls of men: and accordingly he commanded him and his brother to follow

<sup>1</sup> Psalm viii. 6, 7, 8.

him; (the same command which presently after he gave to the two sons of Zebedee.) The word was no sooner spoken, and they landed, but disposing their concerns in the hands of friends, (as we may presume prudent and reasonable men would,) they immediately left all, and followed him; and from this time Peter and the rest became his constant and inseparable disciples, living under the rules of his discipline and institutions.

6. From hence they returned to Capernaum, where our Lord, entering into Simon's house, (the place in all likelihood where he was wont to lodge during his residence in that city) found his mother-in-law visited with a violent fever.<sup>1</sup> No privileges afford an exemption from the ordinary laws of human nature; Christ, under her roof, did not protect this woman from the assaults and invasions of a fever. 'Lord, behold he whom thou lovest is sick,'<sup>2</sup> as they said concerning Lazarus. Here a fresh opportunity offered itself to Christ of exerting his divine power. No sooner was he told of it but he came to her bed-side, rebuked the paroxysm, commanded the fever to be gone, and taking her by the hand to lift her up, in a moment restored her to perfect health and ability to return to the business of her family; all cures being equally easy to Omnipotence.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. viii. 14; Mark, i. 29; Luke, iv. 38.

<sup>2</sup> John, xi. 3.



## SECTION III.

*Of St. Peter, from his election to the Apostolate till the confession which he made of Christ.*

OUR Lord being now to elect some peculiar persons as his immediate vicegerents upon earth, to whose care and trust he might commit the building up of his church, and the planting that religion in the world for which he himself came down from heaven; in order to it, he privately, over night, withdrew himself into a solitary mountain,<sup>1</sup> (commonly called the mount of Christ, from his frequent repairing thither; though some of the ancients will have it to be mount Tabor,) there to make his solemn address to heaven for a prosperous success on so great a work. Herein leaving an excellent copy and precedent to the governors of his church, how to proceed in setting apart persons to so weighty and difficult an employment. Upon this mountain we may conceive there was an oratory, or place of prayer, (probably intimated by St. Luke's *ἡ προσευχή*, for such *proseuchas*, or houses of prayer, usually uncovered and standing in the fields, the Jews had in several places,) wherein our Lord continued all night, not in one continued and entire act of devotion, but probably by intervals and repeated returns of duty.

2. Early the next morning his disciples came to him, out of whom he made choice of twelve to be

<sup>1</sup> Luke, vi. 12.

his apostles,<sup>1</sup> that they might be the constant attendants upon his person, to hear his discourses, and be eye-witnesses of his miracles; to be always conversant with him while he was upon earth, and afterwards to be sent abroad, up and down the world, to carry on that work which he himself had begun; whom, therefore, he invested with the power of working miracles, which was more completely conferred upon them after his ascension into heaven. Passing by the several fancies and conjectures of the ancients, why our Saviour pitched upon the just number of twelve, (whereof before,) it may deserve to be considered, whether our Lord, being now to appoint the supreme officers and governors of his church, which the apostle styles the 'commonwealth of Israel,'<sup>2</sup> might not herein have a more peculiar allusion to the twelve patriarchs, as founders of the several tribes; or to the constant heads and rulers of those twelve tribes, of which the body of the Jewish nation did consist: especially since he himself seems elsewhere to give countenance to it, when he tells the apostles that 'when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory,' that is, be gone back to heaven, and have taken full possession of his evangelical kingdom, which principally commenced from his resurrection, that then 'they also should sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel';<sup>3</sup> that is, they should have great power and authority in the church, such as the power of the keys, and other rights of spiritual judicature and sovereignty, answerable in some proportion to the power and dignity which the heads and rulers of the twelve tribes of Israel did enjoy.

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 1; Mark, iii. 14; Luke, vi. 13.

<sup>2</sup> Ephes. ii. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xix. 28.

3. In the enumeration of these twelve apostles, all the evangelists constantly place St. Peter in the front, and St. Matthew<sup>1</sup> expressly tells us that he was the first; that is, he was the first that was called to be an apostle: his age also, and the gravity of his person more particularly qualifying him for a primacy of order amongst the rest of the apostles, as that without which no society of men can be managed or maintained. Less than this, as none will deny him, so, more than this neither Scripture nor primitive antiquity do allow him. And now it was that our Lord actually conferred that name upon him which before he had promised him. 'Simon he surnamed Peter.'<sup>2</sup> It may here be inquired, when and by whom the apostles were baptized. That they were is unquestionable, being themselves appointed to confer it upon others; but when or how the Scripture is altogether silent. Nicephorus,<sup>3</sup> from no worse an author, as he pretends, than Euodius, St. Peter's immediate successor in the see of Antioch, tells us, that of all the apostles Christ baptized none but Peter with his own hands; that Peter baptized Andrew and the two sons of Zebedee, and they the rest of the apostles. This, if so, would greatly make for the honour of St. Peter. But alas! his authority is not only suspicious but supposititious, in a manner deserted by St. Peter's best friends, and the strongest champions of his cause. Baronius himself, however, sometimes<sup>4</sup> willing to make use of him, elsewhere confesses<sup>5</sup> that this epistle of Euodius is

<sup>1</sup> Matt. x. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Mark, iii. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. c. 3, p. 134.

<sup>4</sup> Ad. An. 31, num. 40.

<sup>5</sup> Ad. An. 71, num. 13.

altogether unknown to any of the ancients. As for the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus, which to the same purpose he quotes out of Sophronius,<sup>1</sup> (though not Sophronius but Johannes Moschus, as is notoriously known, be the author of that book,) besides that it is delivered upon an uncertain report, pretended to have been alleged in a discourse between one Dionysius, bishop of Ascalon, and his clergy, out of a book of Clemens not now extant; his authors are much alike, that is, of no great value and authority.

4. Amongst these apostles our Lord chose a triumvirate, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, to be his more intimate companions, whom he admitted more familiarly than the rest unto all the more secret passages and transactions of his life. The first instance of which was on this occasion:—Jairus,<sup>2</sup> a ruler of the synagogue, had a daughter desperately sick, whose disease, having baffled all the arts of physic, was only curable by the immediate agency of the God of nature. He therefore, in all humility, addresses himself to our Saviour; which he had no sooner done but servants came post to tell him that it was in vain to trouble our Lord, for that his daughter was dead. Christ bids him not despond; if his faith held out there was no danger. And suffering none to follow him but Peter, James, and John, he goes along with him to the house; where he was derided by the sorrowful friends and neighbours, for telling them that she was not perfectly dead. But our Lord entering in, with the com-

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Jos. Moschi Prat. Spir. c. 176; Bibl. P. Græc. L. tom. ii. p. 1133.

<sup>2</sup> Mark, v. 22.

manding efficacy of two words, restored her at once both to life and perfect health.

5. Our Lord after this preached many sermons, and wrought many miracles; amongst which none more remarkable than his feeding a multitude of five thousand men, besides women and children, but with five loaves and two fishes;<sup>1</sup> of which, nevertheless, twelve baskets of fragments were taken up. Which being done, and the multitude dismissed, he commanded the apostles to take ship, it being now near night, and to cross over to Capernaum, whilst he himself, as his manner was, retired to a neighbouring mountain, to dispose himself to prayer and contemplation. The apostles were scarce got into the middle of the sea, when on a sudden a violent storm and tempest began to arise, whereby they were brought into present danger of their lives. Our Saviour, who knew how the case stood with them, and how much they laboured under infinite pains and fears, having himself caused this tempest for the greater trial of their faith, a little before morning (for so long they remained in this imminent danger) immediately conveyed himself upon the sea, where the waves received him, being proud to carry their master. He who refused to gratify the devils, when tempting him to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple, did here commit himself to a boisterous and instable element, and that in a violent storm, walking upon the water as if it had been dry ground. But that infinite power that made and supports the world, as it gave rules to all particular beings, so can, when it pleaseth, countermand the laws of their

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xiv. 17.

creation, and make them act contrary to their natural inclinations. If God say the word, the sun will stand still in the middle of the heavens; if, Go back, it will retrocede, as upon the dial of Ahaz: if he command it, the heavens will become as brass, and the earth as iron, and that for three years and a half together, as in the case of Elijah's prayer: If he say to the sea, Divide, it will run upon heaps, and become on both sides as firm as a wall of marble. Nothing can be more natural than for the fire to burn, and yet at God's command it will forget its nature, and become a screen and a fence to the three children in the Babylonian furnace. What heavier than iron, or more natural than for gravity to tend downwards? yet, when God will have it, iron shall float like cork on the top of the water. The proud and raging sea, that naturally refuses to bear the bodies of men while alive, became here as firm as brass, when commanded to wait upon and do homage to the God of nature. Our Lord walking toward the ship, as if he had an intention to pass it, he was espied by them, who presently thought it to be the apparition of a spirit. Hereupon they were seized with great terror and consternation, and their fears were, in all likelihood, heightened by the vulgar opinion, that there are evil spirits that choose rather to appear in the night than by day. While they were in this agony, our Lord, taking compassion on them, calls to them, and bids them not be afraid, for that it was no other than he himself. Peter (the eagerness of whose temper carried him forward to all bold and resolute undertakings) entreated our Lord, that if it was he, he might have leave to come upon the water to him. Having received his orders, he went out of the

ship, and walked upon the sea to meet his master. But when he found the wind to bear hard against him, and the waves to rise round about him, whereby, probably, the sight of Christ was intercepted, he began to be afraid; and the higher his fears arose the lower his faith began to sink, and together with that, his body to sink under water: whereupon, in a passionate fright, he cried out to our Lord to help him; who, reaching out his arm, took him by the hand, and set him again upon the top of the water, with this gentle reproof: 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' It being the weakness of our faith that makes the influences of the divine power and goodness to have no better effect upon us. Being come to the ship, they took them in; where our Lord no sooner arrived, but the winds and waves, observing their duty to their sovereign Lord, and having done the errand which they came upon, mannerly departed and vanished away, and the ship in an instant was at the shore. All that were in the ship being strangely astonished at this miracle, and fully convinced of the Divinity of his person, came and did homage to him, with this confession: 'Of a truth thou art the Son of God.' After which they went ashore, and landed in the country of Genesareth, and there more fully acknowledged him before all the people.

6. The next day, great multitudes flocking after him, he entered into a synagogue at Capernaum; and taking occasion from the late miracle of the loaves, which he had wrought amongst them, he began to discourse concerning himself, as the 'true manna,'<sup>1</sup> and the 'bread that came down from hea-

<sup>1</sup> John, vi. 32.

ven ;' largely opening unto them many of the more sublime and spiritual mysteries, and the necessary and important duties of the gospel. Hereupon a great part of his auditory who had hitherto followed him, finding their understandings gravelled with these difficult and uncommon notions, and that the duties he required were likely to grate hard upon them, and perceiving now that he was not the Messiah they took him for, whose kingdom should consist in an external grandeur and plenty, but was to be managed and transacted in a more inward and spiritual way ; hereupon fairly left him in open field, and henceforth quite turned their backs upon him. Whereupon our Lord, turning about to his apostles, asked them whether they also would go away from him ? Peter (spokesman generally for all the rest) answered, whither they should go to mend and better their condition ; should they return back to Moses ? alas ! he laid ' a yoke upon them which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear. Should they go to the Scribes and Pharisees ? they would feed them with stones instead of bread, obtrude human traditions upon them for divine dictates and commands. Should they betake themselves to the philosophers amongst the Gentiles ? they were miserably blind and shortsighted in their notions of things, and their sentiments and opinions not only different from, but contrary to one another. No, it was he only had ' the words of eternal life,' whose doctrine could instruct them in the plain way to heaven ; that they had fully assented to what both John and he had said concerning himself ; that they were fully persuaded, both from the efficacy of his sermons which they heard, and the powerful conviction of his



miracles, which they had seen, that he was 'the Son of the living God,' the true Messiah and Saviour of the world. But notwithstanding this fair and plausible testimony, he tells them that they were not all of this mind; that there was a satan amongst them, one that was moved by the spirit and impulse, and that acted according to the rules and interest of the devil: intimating Judas, who should betray him. So hard is it to meet with a body of so just and pure a constitution wherein some rotten member or distempered part is not to be found.

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#### SECTION IV.

*Of St. Peter, from the time of his Confession till our Lord's last Passover.*

IT was some time since our Saviour had kept his third passover at Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup> when he directed his journey towards Cæsarea Philippi; where by the way, having, like a careful master of his family, first prayed with his apostles, he began to ask them (having been more than two years publicly conversant amongst them) what the world thought concerning him. They answered, that the opinions of men about him were various and different; that some took him for John the Baptist lately risen from the dead; between whose doctrine, discipline, and way of life, in the main, there was so great a correspondence. That others thought he was Elias;

<sup>1</sup> Mark, viii. 27; Matt. xvi. 21; Luke, ix. 18.

probably judging so from the gravity of his person, freedom of his preaching, the fame and reputation of his miracles; especially since the Scriptures assured them he was not dead, but taken up into heaven, and had so expressly foretold that he should return back again. That others looked upon him as the prophet Jeremiah alive again; of whose return the Jews had great expectations, insomuch that some of them thought the soul of Jeremiah was re-inspired into Zacharias. Or if not thus, at least that he was one of the more eminent of the ancient prophets, or that the soul of some of these persons had been breathed into him: the doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, first broached and propagated by Pythagoras, being at this time current among the Jews, and owned by the Pharisees as one of their prime notions and principles.<sup>1</sup>

2. This account not sufficing, our Lord comes closer and nearer to them; tells them, it was no wonder if the common people were divided into these wild thoughts concerning him; but since they had been always with him, had been hearers of his sermons, and spectators of his miracles, he inquired what they themselves thought of him. Peter, ever forward to return an answer, and therefore, by the fathers, frequently styled "the mouth of the apos-

<sup>1</sup> The Jews had long since imbibed the love of Grecian philosophy, which began to be current among them from the time of Alexander. And as the Christians of Alexandria afterwards mingled Platonism with the gospel, so the Pharisees, but by doing much more force to both systems, mingled the doctrines of Pythagoras with those of Moses; or rather with the fanciful comments by which their rabbis had corrupted the pure word of Scripture. This system is alluded to in the account of the man born blind, John ix. 3.—ED.

ties,"<sup>1</sup> told him, in the name of the rest, that he was the Messiah, ' the Son of the living God,' promised of old in the law and the prophets, heartily desired and looked for by all good men, anointed and set apart by God to be the King, Priest, and Prophet of his people. To this excellent and comprehensive confession of St. Peter's, our Lord returns this great eulogy and commendation: ' Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven:' that is, this faith which thou hast now confessed is not human, contrived by man's wit, or built upon his testimony, but upon those notions and principles which I was sent by God to reveal to the world, and those mighty and solemn attestations which he has given from heaven, to the truth both of my person and my doctrine. And because thou hast so freely made this confession, therefore ' I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' That is, that as thy name signifies a stone, or rock, such shalt thou thyself be, firm, solid, and immovable in building of the church; which shall be so orderly erected by thy care and diligence, and so firmly founded upon that faith which thou hast now confessed, that all the attempts and assaults which the powers of hell can make against it shall not be able to overturn it. Moreover, ' I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven:'

<sup>1</sup> Τὸ τόμα τῶν ἀποστόλων ὁ Πέτρος ὁ πανταχοῦ θερμὸς, ὁ τοῦ χοροῦ τῶν ἀποστόλων κορυφαῖος, πάντων ἐροτηθέντων, αὐτὸς ἀποκρίνεται.—Chrysost. in Matt. xvi. p. 483.

that is, thou shalt have that spiritual authority and power within the church, whereby, as with keys, thou shalt be able to shut and lock out obstinate and impenitent sinners, and, upon their repentance, to unlock the door and take them in again: and what thou shalt thus regularly do, shall be owned in the court above, and ratified by God in heaven.

3. Upon these several passages, the champions of the church of Rome mainly build the unlimited supremacy and infallibility of the bishops of that see; with how much truth and how little reason it is not my present purpose to discuss. It may suffice here to remark, that though this place does very much tend to exalt the honour of Peter, yet is there nothing herein personal and peculiar to him alone, as distinct from, and preferred above the rest of the apostles. Does he here make confession of Christ's being the Son of God? Yet, besides that herein he spake but the sense of all the rest, this was no more than what others had said as well as he, yea before he was so much as called to be a disciple. Thus Nathanael, at his first coming to Christ, expressly told him, ' Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.'<sup>1</sup> Does our Lord here style him a rock? All the apostles are elsewhere equally called foundations; yea, said to be the ' twelve foundations upon which the wall of the new Jerusalem,'<sup>2</sup> that is, the evangelical church, is erected; and sometimes others of them besides Peter are called pillars, as they have relation to the church already built. Does Christ here promise the keys to Peter? that is, power of governing, and

<sup>1</sup> John, i. 49.    <sup>2</sup> Rev. xxi. 14; Eph. ii. 20; Gal. ii. 9.

of exercising church censures, and absolving penitent sinners? The very same is elsewhere promised to all the apostles, and almost in the very same terms and words: 'If thine offending brother prove obstinate, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee an heathen and a publican. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'<sup>1</sup> And elsewhere, when ready to leave the world, he tells them: 'As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.'<sup>2</sup> By all which it is evident, that our Lord did not here give any personal prerogative to St. Peter, as universal pastor and head of the Christian church, much less to those who were to be his successors in the see of Rome; but that as he made his confession in the name of the rest of the apostles, so what was here promised unto him was equally intended unto all. Nor did the more considering and judicious part of the fathers (however giving a mighty reverence to St. Peter) ever understand it in any other sense. Sure I am, that Origin<sup>3</sup> tells us, that every true Christian that makes this confession with the same spirit and integrity which St Peter did, shall have the same blessing and commendation from Christ conferred upon him.

4. The holy Jesus, knowing the time of his passion to draw on, began to prepare the minds of his apostles against that fatal hour; telling them what hard and bitter things he should suffer at Jerusa-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii. 17, 18.

<sup>2</sup> John, xx. 21, 23.

<sup>3</sup> Comment. in loc. tom. iii. fol. 1, fac. 2.

lem, what affronts and indignities he must undergo, and be at last put to death, with all the arts of torture and disgrace, by the decree of the Jewish Sanhedrim.<sup>1</sup> Peter, whom our Lord had infinitely encouraged and endeared to him, by the great things which he had lately said concerning him, so that his spirits were now afloat, and his passions ready to overrun the banks, not able to endure a thought that so much evil should befall his master, broke out into an over-confident and unseasonable interruption of him: 'He took him and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee.' Besides his great kindness and affection to his master, the minds of the apostles were not yet thoroughly purged from the hopes and expectations of a glorious reign of the Messiah; so that Peter could not but look upon these sufferings as unbecoming and inconsistent with the state and dignity of the Son of God; and therefore thought good to advise his Lord to take care of himself, and, while there was time, to prevent and avoid them. This our Lord, who valued the redemption of mankind infinitely before his own ease and safety, resented at so high a rate that he returned upon him with this tart and stinging reproof: 'Get thee behind me, Satan:' the very same treatment which he once gave to the devil himself, when he made that insolent proposal to him, 'to fall down and worship him.'<sup>2</sup> Though in Satan it was the result of pure malice and hatred, in Peter only an error of love and great regard. However, our Lord could not but look upon it as a mischievous and diabolical

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 21; Mark, viii. 31; Luke, ix. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Luke, iv. 8.

counsel, prompted and promoted, by the great adversary of mankind. Away therefore, says Christ, with thy hellish and pernicious counsel: 'Thou art an offence unto me,' in seeking to oppose and undermine that great design for which I purposely came down from heaven: in this 'thou savourest not the things of God, but those that be of men, in suggesting to me those little shifts and arts of safety and self-preservation, which human prudence and the love of men's own selves are wont to dictate to them: by which, though we may learn Peter's mighty kindness to our Saviour, yet that herein he did not take his measures right; a plain evidence that his infallibility had not taken place.

5. About a week after this, our Saviour being to receive a type and specimen of his future glorification, took with him his three more intimate apostles, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee,<sup>1</sup> and went up into a very high mountain, which the ancients generally conceived to have been Mount Tabor, a round and very high mountain, situate in the plains of Galilee. And now was even literally fulfilled what the Psalmist had spoken: 'Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name.'<sup>2</sup> For what greater joy and triumph than to be peculiarly chosen to be the holy mount, whereon our Lord, in so eminent a manner, 'received from God the Father honour and glory,' and made such magnificent displays of his divine power and majesty? For while they were here earnestly employed in prayer, (as seldom did our Lord enter upon any eminent action but he first made his address to heaven,) he was suddenly transformed into another manner of appear-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvii. 1; Mark, ix. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Psalm lxxxix. 12.

ance ; such a lustre and radiancy darted from his face, that the sun itself shines not brighter at noon-day : such beams of light reflected from his garments as outdid the light itself that was round about them ; so exceeding pure and white that the snow might blush to compare with it ; nor could the fuller's art purify any thing into half that whiteness ; an evident and sensible representation of the glory of that state wherein the just shall ' walk in white, and shine as the sun, in the kingdom of the Father.' During this heavenly scene, there appeared Moses and Elias, (who, as the Jews say, shall come together,) clothed with all the brightness and majesty of a glorified state, familiarly conversing with him, and discoursing of the death and sufferings which he was shortly to undergo, and his departure into heaven. Behold here together the three greatest persons that ever were the ministers of heaven : Moses, under God, the institutor and promulgator of the law ; Elias, the great reformer of it, when under its deepest degeneracy and corruption ; and the blessed Jesus, the Son of God, who came to take away what was weak and imperfect, and to introduce a more manly and rational institution, and to communicate the last revelation which God would make of his mind to the world. Peter and the two apostles that were with him were, in the mean time, fast asleep ; heavy through want of natural rest, (it being probably night when this was done,) or else overpowered with these extraordinary appearances, which the frailty and weakness of their present state could not bear, were fallen into a trance ; but now awaking, were strangely surprised to behold our Lord surrounded with so much glory, and those two great persons



conversing with him : knowing who they were, probably by some particular marks and signatures that were upon them, or else by immediate revelation, or from the discourse which passed betwixt Christ and them, or possibly from some communication which they themselves might have with them. While these heavenly guests were about to depart, Peter, in a great rapture and ecstasy of mind, addressed himself to our Saviour, telling him how infinitely they were pleased and delighted with their being there ; and, to that purpose, desiring his leave that they might erect three tabernacles, one for him, one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he was thus saying, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed the two great ministers, and wrapped them up ; out of which came a voice : ‘ This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased ; hear ye him : ’ which when the apostles heard, and saw the cloud coming over themselves, they were seized with great consternation, and fell upon their faces to the ground ; whom our Lord gently touched, bade them arise and disband their fears ; whereupon, looking up, they saw none but their master, the rest having vanished and disappeared. In memory of these great transactions, Bede tells us,<sup>1</sup> that in pursuance of St. Peter’s petition about the three tabernacles, there were afterwards three churches built upon the top of this mountain, which, in after times, were had in great veneration ; which might possibly give some foundation to that report which one makes, that in his time there were showed the ruins of those three tabernacles which were built according to St. Peter’s desire.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> De Loc. Sanct. c. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Bern. à Bridenb. Itiner. Terræ Sanct. vid. J. Cotovia Itiner. lib. iii. c. 7, p. 355.

6. After this, our Lord and his apostles having travelled through Galilee,<sup>1</sup> the gatherers of the tribute-money came to Peter, and asked him, whether his master was not obliged to pay the tribute, which God, under the Mosaic law, commanded to be yearly paid by every Jew above twenty years old, to the use of the temple; which so continued to the times of Vespasian, under whom the temple being destroyed, it was by him transferred to the use of the capitol at home, being to the value of half a shekel, or fifteenpence of our money. To this question of theirs, Peter positively answers, Yes; knowing his master would never be backward, either 'to give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, or unto God the things that are God's. Peter going into the house to give an account to his master, and to know his mind concerning it, Christ prevented him with this question: 'What thinkest thou, Simon, of whom do earthly kings exact tribute, of their own children' and family, or from other people? Peter answered, Not from their own servants and family, but from strangers. To which our Lord presently replied, that then, according to his own argument and opinion, both he himself, as being the Son of God, and they, whom he had taken to be his menial and domestic servants, were free from this tax of head-money, yearly to be paid to God. But rather than give offence, by seeming to despise the temple, and to undervalue that authority that had settled this tribute, he resolves to put himself to the expense and charges of a miracle, and therefore commanded Peter to go to the sea, and take up the first fish

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvii. 24.

which came to his hook, in whose mouth he should find a piece of money, (a stater, in value a shekel, or half-a-crown,) which he took and gave to the collectors, both for his master and himself.

7. Our Lord, after this, discoursing to them how to carry themselves towards their offending brethren, Peter, being desirous to be more particularly informed in this matter, asked our Saviour, how oft a man was obliged to forgive his brother, in case of offence and trespass, whether seven times were not enough.<sup>1</sup> He told him, that upon his neighbour's repentance, he was not only bound to do it 'seven times, but until seventy times seven:' that is, he must be indulgent to him, as oft as the offender returns and begs it, and heartily professes his sorrow and repentance: which he further illustrates by a plain and excellent parable, and thence draws this conclusion, that the same measures, either of compassion or cruelty, which men show to their fellow-brethren, they themselves shall meet with at the hands of God, the supreme ruler and justiciary of the world. It was not long after, when a brisk young man addressed himself to our Saviour, to know of him by what methods he might best attain eternal life;<sup>2</sup> our Lord, to humble his confidence, bid him 'sell his estate, and give it to the poor:' and, putting himself under his discipline, he should have a much better 'treasure in heaven.' The man was rich, and liked not the counsel, nor was he willing to purchase happiness at such a rate, and accordingly went away under great sorrow and discontent. Upon which Christ takes occasion to let them know, how hardly those men would get

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xviii. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xix. 16; Mark, x. 17; Luke, xviii. 18.

to heaven, who built their comfort and happiness upon the plenty and abundance of these outward things. Peter, taking hold of this opportunity, asked, what return they themselves should have, who had quitted and renounced whatever they had for his sake and service. Our Saviour answers, that no man should be a loser by his service; that for their parts, they should be recompensed with far greater privileges; and that whoever should forsake houses or lands, kindred or relations, out of love to him and his religion, should enjoy them again, with infinite advantages, in this world, if consistent with the circumstances of their state, and those troubles and persecutions which would necessarily arise from the profession of the gospel: however, they should have what would make infinite amends for all—eternal life in the other world.

8. Our Saviour, in order to his last fatal journey to Jerusalem, that he might the better comply with the prophecy that went before him, sent two of his apostles, who in all probability were Peter and John, with an authoritative commission to fetch him an ass to ride on;<sup>1</sup> (he had none of his own; he who 'was rich, for our sakes made himself poor;' he lived upon charity all his life, had neither an ass to ride on, nor a house where to lay his head; no, nor after his death a tomb to lie in, but what the charity of others provided for him;) whereon being mounted, and attended with the festivities of the people, he set forward in his journey; wherein there appears an admirable mixture of humility and majesty: the ass he rode on be-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxi. 1.

came the meanness and meekness of a prophet; but his arbitrary commission for the fetching it, and the ready obedience of its owners, spake the prerogative of a king; the palms borne before him, the garments strewed in his way, and the joyful hosannahs and acclamations of the people, proclaim at once both the majesty of a prince and the triumph of a Saviour; for such expressions of joy we find were usual in public and festival solemnities. Thus the historian, describing the emperor Commodus's triumphant return to Rome,<sup>1</sup> tells us, that the senate and whole people of Rome, to testify their mighty kindness and veneration for him, came out of the city to meet him, carrying palms and laurels along with them, and throwing about all sorts of flowers that were then in season. In this manner our Lord being entered the city, he soon after retired to Bethany, whence he dispatched Peter and John to make preparation for the pass-over; giving them instructions where he would have it kept:<sup>2</sup> accordingly they found the person he had described to them, whom they followed home to his house. Whether this was the house of John the Evangelist, (as Nicephorus tells us,<sup>3</sup>) situate near Mount Sion, or of Simon the leper, or of Nicodemus, or of Joseph of Arimathea, as others severally conjecture, seeing none of the evangelists have thought fit to tell us, it may not become us curiously to inquire.

<sup>1</sup> Herod. lib. i. in vit. Comm. p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 17; Mark, xiv. 12; Luke, xxii. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. i. c. 28, p. 104.

## SECTION V.

*Of St. Peter, from the last Passover till the Death of Christ.*

ALL things being now prepared, our Saviour with his apostles comes down for the celebration of the passover: and being entered into the house, they all orderly took their places. Our Lord, who had always taught them by his practice, no less than by his doctrine, did now particularly design to teach them humility and charity by his own example: and that the instance might be the greater, he underwent the meanest offices of the ministry. Towards the end, therefore, of the paschal supper, he arose from the table, and laying aside his upper garment, (which, according to the fashion of those eastern countries, being long, was unfit for action,) and himself taking a towel, and pouring water into a bason, he began to wash all the apostles' feet;<sup>1</sup> not disdaining those of Judas himself. Coming to Peter, he would by no means admit an instance of so much condescension. What? the master to do this to the servant! the Son of God to so vile a sinner! This made him a second time refuse it: 'Thou shalt never wash my feet.' But our Lord soon corrects his imprudent modesty, by telling him, that 'if he washed him not he could have no part with him:' insinuating the mystery of this action, which was to denote remission of sin,

<sup>1</sup> John, xiii. 4.

and the purifying virtue of the Spirit of Christ to be poured upon all true Christians. Peter, satisfied with the answer, soon altered his resolution : ' Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.' If the case be so, let me be washed all over, rather than come short of my portion in thee.<sup>1</sup> This being done, he returned again to the table, and acquainted them with the meaning and tendency of this mystical action, and what force it ought to have upon them towards one another. The washing itself denoted their inward and spiritual cleansing by the blood and spirit of Christ, symbolically typified and represented by all the washings and baptisms of the Mosaic institution : the washing of the feet respected our entire sanctification of our whole spirit, soul, and body, no part being to be left impure. And then, that all this should be done by so great a person, their Lord and master preached to their very senses a sermon of the greatest humility and condescension ; and taught them how little reason they had to boggle at the meanest offices of kindness and charity towards others, when he himself had stooped to so low an abasement towards them. And now he began more immediately to reflect upon his sufferings, and upon him who was to be the occasion of them ; telling them, that one of them would be the traitor to

<sup>1</sup> ————— φιλοσόργω δὲ μενοινῶ ~  
 Εἰ πόδας ὑμείων καθαρῶ φαίδρυνα λοετρῶ  
 Ἥγητῆρ ἐ ἀναξ περιδέξις, ἀλλὰ ἐ αὐτοῦς  
 Ἀντίτυπον Θέμις ἐστὶν ἐμὸν μίμημα μαθόντας  
 Ὑμέας, ἀλλήλων φίλεις πόδας ὕδατινίπτειν.  
 Δεῖγμα γὰρ ἐπλετο τοῦτο διδάσκαλον, ὅφρα ἐ ὑμεῖς  
 Ἔργον ὅπερ ποίησα σοφόν, τελέσητε ἐ αὐτοί,  
 Πάντες ἐν ἀλλήλοισιν ἀμοιβαίῳ τινὶ Θεσμῶ  
 Ἴσοφνές μίμημα δαήμονος ἡγεμονῆος.

Nonn. Paraphr. in loc.

betray him. Whereat they were strangely troubled, and every one began to suspect himself, till Peter (whose love and care for his master commonly made him start sooner than the rest) made signs to St. John, who lay in our Saviour's bosom, to ask him particularly who it was; which our Saviour presently showed, by making them understand that it was Judas Iscariot; who not long after left the company.

2. And now our Lord began the institution of his supper; that great solemn institution which he was resolved to leave behind him, to be constantly celebrated in all ages of the church, as the standing monument of his love in dying for mankind. For now he told them, that he himself must leave them, and that 'whither he went they could not come.'<sup>1</sup> Peter, not well understanding what he meant, asked him whither it was that he was going. Our Lord replied, it was to that place whither he could not now follow him; but that he should do it afterwards: intimating the martyrdom he was to undergo for the sake of Christ. To which Peter answered, that he knew no reason why he might not follow him, seeing that if it was even to the laying down of his life for his sake, he was most ready and resolved to do it. Our Lord liked not this over-confident presumption, and therefore told him, they were great things which he promised, but that he took not the true measures of his own strength, nor espied the snares and designs of Satan, who desired no better an occasion than this to sift and winnow him; but that he had prayed to heaven for him, 'that his faith might not fail;' by which means being

<sup>1</sup> John, xiii. 36; Luke, xxii. 31.



strengthened himself, he should be obliged to strengthen and confirm his brethren. And whereas he so confidently assured him, that he was ready to go along with him, not only into prison but even to death itself, our Lord plainly told him, that notwithstanding all his confident and generous resolutions, before the cock crowed twice, that is, before three of the clock in the morning, he would that very night three several times deny his master. With which answer our Lord wisely rebuked his confidence, and taught him (had he understood the lesson) not to trust to his own strength, but entirely to depend upon him who is able to keep us from falling. Withal insinuating, that though by his sin he would justly forfeit the divine grace and favour, yet upon his repentance he should be restored to the honour of the apostolate, as a certain evidence of the divine goodness and indulgence to him.<sup>1</sup>

3. Having sung a hymn, and concluded the whole affair, he left the house where all these things had been transacted, and went with his apostles unto the mount of Olives;<sup>2</sup> where he again put them in mind how much they would be offended at those things which he was now to suffer: and Peter again renewed his resolute and undaunted

<sup>1</sup> Διὰ τί δὲ πάντα ἀφείς μόνῳ τῷ Πέτρῳ λέγει, Σίμων, Σίμων, ἰδοὺ ὁ Σατανᾶς ἡτήσατο ὑμᾶς σινιάσαι; ἵνα παιδέσῃ αὐτὸν μὴ ἑαυτῷ θαρβεῖν μόνον, ἀλλὰ τοῖς παρ' αὐτοῦ χαρίσμασι σεμνύνεσθαι—τὸ ἐπιτρέψας τήριζον τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς σε, τωτέσι, γενοῦ τήριγμα καὶ διδάσκαλος τῶν διὰ πίστεως προσιόντων ἐμοί· οὐ γὰρ δὴ ἀποσερηθήσῃ, φησὶν, ἀρνησάμενος με, τοῦ ἀποστολικοῦ χαρίσματος, ὅπερ τῆς θείας γαληνότητος καὶ ἀφάτης φιλανθρωπίας ὑπάρχει τεκμήριον. Tit. Bostr. Com. in Luc. xxii. in Bibl. Pp. Gr. Lat. tom. ii. p. 829.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxvi. 30; Mark, xiv. 26.

promise of suffering and dying with him; yea, out of an excessive confidence, told him, that 'though all the rest should forsake and deny him, yet would not he deny him.' How far will zeal and an indiscreet affection transport even a good man into vanity and presumption! Peter questions others, but never doubts himself. So natural is self-love, so apt are we to take the fairest measures of ourselves. Nay, though our Lord had but a little before once and again reproved this vain humour, yet does he still not only persist but grow up in it. So hardly are we brought to espy our own faults, or to be so thoroughly convinced of them as to correct and reform them. This confidence of his inspired all the rest with a mighty courage, all the apostles assuring him of their constant and unshaken adhering to him. Our Lord returning the same answer to Peter which he had done before. From hence they went down into the village of Gethsemane, where leaving the rest of the apostles, he, accompanied with none but Peter, James, and John, retired into a neighbouring garden, (whither, Eusebius tells us,<sup>1</sup> Christians even in his time were wont to come, solemnly to offer up their prayers to heaven; and where, as the Arabian geographer informs us,<sup>2</sup> a fair and stately church was built to the honour of the Virgin Mary,) to enter upon the ante-scene of the fatal tragedy that was now approaching; it bearing a very fit proportion (as some of the fathers have observed<sup>3</sup>) that as the first Adam fell and ruined mankind in a

<sup>1</sup> De loc. Hebr. in voc. Γεθσημανη, p. 134.

<sup>2</sup> Geogr. Nub. Clim. 3, part 5, p. 114.

<sup>3</sup> Cyril. Comment. in Joan. xviii. tom. iv. Theophylact. in Joan. xviii.

garden, so a garden should be the place where the second Adam should begin his passion, in order to the redemption of the world. Gardens, which to us are places of repose and pleasure, and scenes of divertisement and delight, were to our Lord a school of temptation, a theatre of great horrors and sufferings, and the first approaches of the hour of darkness.

4. Here it was that the blessed Jesus laboured under the bitterest agony that could fall upon human nature, which the holy story describes by words sufficiently expressive of the highest grief and sorrow; he was 'afraid, sorrowful,' and 'very heavy;' yea, 'his soul was' *περίλυπος*, 'exceeding sorrowful,' and that 'even unto death;' he was 'sore amazed and very heavy;' he was 'troubled,' *ἐταράχθη*, his soul was shaken with a vehement commotion; yea, he was 'in an agony;' a word by which the Greeks were wont to represent the greatest conflicts and anxieties. The effect of all which was, that 'he prayed more earnestly,' offering up 'prayers and supplications with strong cries and tears,' as the apostle expounds it; and sweat, 'as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground.' What this bloody sweat was, and how far natural or extraordinary, I am not now concerned to inquire. Certain it is, it was a plain evidence of the most intense grief and sadness; for if an extreme fear or trouble will many times cast us into a cold sweat, how great must be the commotion and conflict of our Saviour's mind, which could force open the pores of his body, locked up by the coldness of the night, and make not drops of sweat, but 'great drops,' or (as the word *θρόμβοι* signifies) 'clods' of blood to issue from them! While our

Lord was thus contending with these ante-passions, the three apostles, whom he had left at some distance from him, being tired out with watching, and disposed by the silence of the night, were fallen fast asleep. Our Lord, who had made three several addresses unto heaven, that, if it might consist with his Father's will, this bitter 'cup might pass from him,' (expressing herein the harmless and innocent desires of human nature, which always studies its own preservation,) between each of them came to visit the apostles; and calling to Peter, asked him, whether they could not 'watch' with him 'one hour;' advising them to 'watch and pray,' that they entered 'not into temptation;' adding this argument, that 'the spirit indeed' was 'willing,' but that 'the flesh' was 'weak;' and that therefore there was the more need that they should stand upon their guard. Observe here the incomparable sweetness, the generous candour of our blessed Saviour, to pass so charitable a censure upon an action from whence malice and ill-nature might have drawn monsters and prodigies, and have represented it black as the shades of darkness. The request which our Lord made to these apostles was infinitely reasonable, to watch with him in his bitter agony; their company at least being some refreshment to one under such sad fatal circumstances; and this but for a little time, 'one hour:' it would soon be over, and then they might freely consult their own ease and safety. It was their dear Lord and master whom they now were to attend upon, ready to lay down his life for them, sweating already under the first skirmishes of his sufferings, and expecting every moment when all the powers of darkness would fall upon him. But all these consi-

derations were drowned in a profound security ; the men were fast asleep, and though often awakened and told of it, regarded it not, as if nothing but ease and softness had been then to be dreamed of. An action that looked like the most prodigious ingratitude, and the highest unconcernedness for their Lord and master, and which one would have thought had argued a very great coldness and indifferency of affection towards him. But he would not set it upon the tenters, nor stretch it to what it might easily have been drawn to : he imputes it not to their unthankfulness, or want of affection, nor to their carelessness of what became of him, but merely to their infirmity and the weakness of their bodily temper, himself making the excuse, when they could make none for themselves : ‘ the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ Hereby teaching us to put the most candid and favourable construction upon those actions of others which are capable of various interpretations, and rather with the bee to suck honey, than with the spider to draw poison from them. His last prayer being ended, he came to them, and told them with a gentle rebuke, that now they might ‘ sleep on,’ if they pleased ; that ‘ the hour was at hand that he should be betrayed, and delivered into the hands of men.’

5. While he was thus discoursing to them, a band of soldiers sent from the high-priests, with the traitor Judas to conduct and direct them, rushed into the garden, and seized upon him ; which when the apostles saw, they asked him whether they should attempt his rescue. Peter, (whose ungovernable zeal put him upon all dangerous undertakings,) without staying for an answer, drew his

sword, and espying one more busy than the rest in laying hold upon our Saviour, which was Malchus, (who, though carrying kingship in his name, was but servant to the high-priest,) struck at him with an intention to dispatch him; but God overruling the stroke, it only cut off his right ear. Our Lord liked not this wild and unwarrantable zeal, and therefore entreated their patience, whilst he miraculously healed the wound; and turning to Peter, bade him put up his sword again; told him that they who unwarrantably used the sword should themselves perish by it; that there was no need of these violent and extravagant courses; that if he had a mind to be rid of his keepers he could ask his Father, who would presently send 'more than twelve legions of angels' to his rescue and deliverance: but he must 'drink the cup' which his Father had put into his hand; for how else should the Scriptures be fulfilled, which had expressly foretold 'that these things must be?' Whereupon all the apostles forsook him, and fled from him; and they who before in their promises were as bold as lions, now it came to it, like fearful and timorous hares, ran away from him. Peter and John, though staying last with him, yet followed the same way with the rest, preferring their own safety before the concerns of their master.

6. No sooner was he apprehended by the soldiers, and brought out of the garden, but he was immediately posted from one tribunal to another;<sup>1</sup> brought first to Annas, then carried to Caiaphas, where the Jewish Sanhedrim met together in order

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 57; Mark, xiv. 53; Luke, xxii. 54; John, xviii. 12.

to his trial and condemnation. Peter having a little recovered himself, and gotten loose from his fears, probably encouraged by his companion, St. John, returns back to seek his master, and finding them leading him to the high-priest's hall, followed afar off, to see what would be the event and issue: but coming to the door, could get no admittance, till one of the disciples who was acquainted there, went out and persuaded the servant who kept the door to let him in. Being led into the hall where the servants and officers stood round the fire, Peter also came thither to warm himself, where being espied by the servant-maid that let him in, she, earnestly looking upon him, charged him with being one of Christ's disciples, which Peter publicly denied before all the company, positively affirming that 'he knew him not;' and presently withdrew himself into the porch, where he heard the cock crow: an intimation, one would have thought, which should have awakened his conscience into a quick sense of his duty, and the promise he had made unto his master. In the porch, another of the maids set upon him, charging him 'that he also was one of them that had been with Jesus of Nazareth;' which Peter stoutly denied, saying that he 'knew not Christ;' and the better to gain their belief to what he said, ratified it with an oath. So natural is it for one sin to draw on another.

7. About an hour after, he was a third time set upon by a servant of the high-priest, Malchus's kinsman, whose ear Peter had lately cut off: by him he was charged to be one of Christ's disciples; yea, that his very speech betrayed him to be a Galilean:—for the Galileans, though they did not

speak a different language, had yet a different dialect, using a more confused and barbarous, a broader and more unpolished way of pronunciation than the rest of the Jews; whereby they were easily distinguishable in their speaking from other men; abundant instances whereof there are extant in the Talmud at this day:—nay, not only gave this evidence, but added, that he himself had seen him with Jesus in the garden. Peter still resolutely denied the matter; and to add the highest accomplishment to his sin, ratified it not only with an oath, but a solemn curse and execration, that he was not the person, that he knew not the man. It is but a very weak excuse which St. Ambrose and some others make for this act of Peter's, in saying, 'I know not the man.' "He did well," says he, "to deny him to be man whom he knew to be God."<sup>1</sup> St. Jerome<sup>2</sup> takes notice of this pious and well-meant excuse made for Peter, though out of modesty he conceals the name of its author, but yet justly censures it as trifling and frivolous, and which to excuse man from folly would charge God with falsehood: for if he did not deny him, then our Lord was out, when he said, that that night he 'should thrice deny him;' that is, his person, and not only his humanity. Certainly the best apology that can be made for Peter is, that he quickly repented of this great sin; for no sooner had he done it, but the cock crew again; at which intimation our Saviour turned about, and earnestly looked upon him; a glance that quickly pierced him to

<sup>1</sup> "Bene negavit hominem, quem sciebat Deum."—Ambros. in Luc. xxii. tom. v. 157, vid. Hilar. Comment. in Matth. 328.

<sup>2</sup> Hier. in Matth. xxvi. p. 81, tom. ix. vid. August. in Joan. Tract. lxxvi. col. 417, tom. ix.



the heart, and brought to his remembrance, what our Lord had once and again foretold of him, how foully and shamefully he should deny him. Whereupon, not being able to contain his sorrow, he ran out of doors to give it vent, and 'wept bitterly; passionately bewailing his folly, and the aggravations of his sin; thereby endeavouring to make some reparation for his fault, and recover himself into the favour of heaven, and to prevent the execution of divine justice, by taking a severe revenge upon himself: by these penitential tears he endeavoured to wash off his guilt; as indeed repentance is the next step to innocence.

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## SECTION VI.

*Of St. Peter, from Christ's Resurrection till his Ascension.*

WHAT became of Peter after his late prevarication, whether he followed our Saviour through the several stages of his trial, and personally attended as a mourner at the funeral of his master, we have no account left upon record. No doubt he staid at Jerusalem, and probably with St. John, together with whom we first find him mentioned, when both set forwards to the sepulchre; which was in this manner. Early on that morning whereon our Lord was to return from the grave, Mary Magdalene,<sup>1</sup> and some other devout and pious women,

<sup>1</sup> Mark, xvi. 1.

brought spices and ointments, with a design to embalm the body of our crucified Lord. Coming to the sepulchre at sun-rising, and finding the door open, they entered in, where they were suddenly saluted by an angel, who told them that Jesus was risen, and bade them go and acquaint his apostles, and particularly Peter, that he was returned from the dead; and that he would go before them into Galilee, where they should meet with him. Hereupon they returned back, and acquainted the apostles with what had passed, who beheld the story as the product of a weak and frightened fancy. But Peter and John presently hastened towards the garden:<sup>1</sup> John, being the younger and nimbler, outran his companion, and came first thither; where he only looked, but entered not in, either out of fear in himself, or a great reverence to our Saviour. Peter, though behind in space was before in zeal, and being elder and more considerate, came and resolutely entered in, where they found nothing but the linen cloths lying together in one place, and the napkin that was about his head wrapped together in another; which being disposed with so much care and order, showed (what was falsely suggested by the Jews) that our Saviour's body was not taken away by thieves, who are wont more to consult their escape than how to leave things orderly disposed behind them.

2. The same day about noon we may suppose it was, that our Lord himself appeared alone to Peter; being assured of the thing, though not so precisely of the time. That he did so St. Paul expressly tells us;<sup>2</sup> and so did the apostles to the

<sup>1</sup> Luke, xxiv. 12; John, xx. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 5.

two disciples that came from Emmaus, 'The Lord is risen, and hath appeared to Simon;'<sup>1</sup> which probably intimates, that it was before his appearing to those two disciples. And indeed we cannot but think that our Lord would hasten the manifestation of himself to him, as compassionating his case, being overwhelmed with sorrow for the late shameful denial of his master; and was therefore willing in the first place to honour him with his presence, at once to confirm him in the article of his resurrection, and to let him see that he was restored to the place which before he had in his grace and favour. St. Paul mentioning his several appearances after his resurrection, seems to make this the first of them, that 'he was seen of Cephas.' Not that it was simply the first, for he first appeared to the women. But, as Chrysostom observes,<sup>2</sup> it was the first that was made to men. He was first seen by him who most desired to see him. He also adds several probable conjectures, why our Lord first discovered himself to Peter: as, that it required a more than ordinary firmness and resolution of mind to be able to bear such a sight; for they who beheld him after others had seen him, and had heard their frequent testimonies and reports, had had their faith greatly prepared and encouraged to entertain it; but he who was to be honoured with the first appearance had need of a bigger and more undaunted faith, lest he should be overborne, τῇ παρὰδόξῃ τῆς θείας, with such a strange and unwonted sight. That Peter

<sup>1</sup> Luke, xxiv. 34.

<sup>2</sup> 'Εν ἀνδράσι τούτῳ πρώτῳ, τῷ μάλιστα αὐτὸν ποθοῦντι ἰδεῖν.—Chrysost. in 1 ad Cor. c. 15, Hom. 38, p. 666. Ibid. p. 667.

was the first that had made a signal confession of his master, and therefore it was fit and reasonable that he should first see him alive after his resurrection. That Peter had lately denied his Lord, the grief whereof lay hard upon him; that therefore our Saviour was willing to administer some consolation to him, and, as soon as might be, to let him see that he had not cast him off, like the kind Samaritan, he made haste to help him, and to pour oil into his wounded conscience.

3. Some time after this, the apostles began to resolve upon their journey into Galilee, as he himself had commanded them. If it be inquired why they went no sooner, seeing this was the first message and intimation they had received from him, St. Ambrose's resolution<sup>1</sup> seems very rational, that our Lord indeed had commanded them to go thither, but that their fears for some time kept them at home; not being as yet fully satisfied in the truth of his resurrection, till our Lord, by often appearing to them, had confirmed their minds, and put the case beyond all dispute. They went, as we may suppose, in several companies, lest going all in one body they should awaken the power and malice of their enemies, and alarm the care and vigilancy of the state, which, by reason of the noise that our Saviour's trial and execution had made up and down the country, was yet full of jealousies and fears. We find Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, and the two sons of Zebedee, and two more of the disciples, arrived at some town about the sea of Tiberias; where the providence of God guiding the instance of their employment, Peter,

<sup>1</sup> Comment. in Luc. xxiv. in fin. p. 170, tom. v.

accompanied with the rest, returns to his old trade of fishing.<sup>1</sup> They laboured all night, but caught nothing. Early in the morning, a grave person, probably in the habit of a traveller, presents himself upon the shore, and calling to them, asked them whether they had any meat. When they told him no, he advised them to cast the net on the right side of the ship, that so the miracle might not seem to be the effect of chance, and they should not fail to speed. They did so, and the net presently inclosed so great a draught that they were scarce able to drag it ashore. St. John, amazed with the strangeness of the matter, told Peter that surely this must be the Lord, whom the winds, and the sea, and all the inhabitants of that watery region were so ready to obey. Peter's zeal presently took fire, notwithstanding the coldness of the season, and impatient of the least moment's being kept from the company of his dear Lord and master, without any consideration of the danger to which he exposed himself, he girt his fisher's coat about him, and throwing himself into the sea, swam to shore, not being able to stay till the ship could arrive, which came presently after.<sup>2</sup> Landing, they found a fire ready made, and fish laid upon it, either immediately created by his divine power, or which came to the shore of its own accord, and offered itself to his hand :

<sup>1</sup> John, xxi. 3.

<sup>2</sup> ——— ὁ δὲ σχεδὸν ἐγγὺς ὁρούσας,  
 Εἴματι δαιδαλέῳ λαγόνας μιτρώσατο Σίμων,  
 Καὶ ταχὺς εἰς ῥόον ἄλτο, ἢ ἡθάδα πόντον ἀμείβων,  
 Χεῖρας ἑρεμύσας κεφαλὴν εἰς ὕψος αἵρων,  
 Ποσσὶν ἀμοιβαίοισιν ὀπισθερον ὤθειεν ὕδωρ,  
 Ἀκτῆς δὲ ἐγγὺς ἔκανε θεουδόχον ἡόνα βαίνων.

Nonn. Paraphr. in loc.

which notwithstanding, he commands them to bring of the fish which they had lately caught, and prepare it for their dinner, he himself dining with them; both that he might give them an instance of mutual love and fellowship, and also assure them of the truth of his human nature, since his return from the dead.

4. Dinner being ended, our Lord more particularly addressed himself to Peter, urging him to the utmost diligence in his care of souls: and because he knew that nothing but a mighty love to himself could carry him through the troubles and hazards of so dangerous and difficult an employment; an employment attended with all the impediments which either the perverseness of men, or the malice and subtilty of the devil could cast in the way to hinder it; therefore he first inquired of him, whether he loved him more than the rest of the apostles, herein mildly reproving his former over-confident resolution, that 'though all the rest should deny him, yet would not he deny him.' Peter modestly replied, not censuring others, much less preferring himself before them, that our Lord knew the integrity of his affection towards him. This question he puts three several times to Peter, who as often returned the same answer: it being but just and reasonable, that he who by a threefold denial had given so much cause to question, should now by a threefold confession give more than ordinary assurance of his sincere affection to his master.<sup>1</sup> Peter was a little troubled at this

<sup>1</sup> Τὸ τριπλοῦν τῆς ἀρνήσεως τῷ τριπλῷ τῆς συγκαταθέσεως ὁ ἀγαθὸς ἱατρὸς ἐξωστράκισε.—Isid. Pelus. l. i. Ep. 103, p. 27. "Redditur negationi trina trina confessio, nè minùs amorì lingua serviat quàm timori; et plus vocis elicuisse videa-

frequent questioning of his love, and therefore more expressly appeals to our Lord's omniscience, that he who knew all things must needs know that he loved him. To each of these confessions our Lord added this signal trial of his affection; then, 'Feed my sheep;' that is, faithfully instruct and teach them, carefully rule and guide them; persuade, not compel them; feed, not fleece nor kill them. And so it is plain St. Peter himself understood it, by the charge which he gives to the guides and rulers of the church, that 'they should feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre; but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but as examples to the flock.'<sup>1</sup> But that by feeding Christ's sheep and lambs, here commended to St. Peter, should be meant a universal and uncontrollable monarchy and dominion over the whole Christian church, and that over the apostles themselves and their successors in ordinary, and this power and supremacy solely invested in St. Peter, and those who were to succeed him in the see of Rome, is so wild an inference, and such a melting down words to run into any shape, as could never with any face have been offered, or been possible to have been imposed upon the belief of mankind, if men had not first subdued their reason to their interest, and captivated both to an implicit faith and a blind obedience. For granting that our Lord here addressed his speech only unto Peter, yet the very same power, in equivalent terms, is elsewhere indifferently granted to all the apos-

tur mors imminens, quàm vita præsens."—Aug. in Joan. tract. 123, col. 566.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. v. 2, 3.

ties, and in some measure to the ordinary pastors and governors of the church : as when our Lord told them, that 'all power' was given him 'in heaven and in earth,' by virtue whereof they should 'go teach and baptize all nations,' and 'preach the gospel to every creature:' that they should 'feed God's flock, rule well,' inspect and 'watch over' those over whom they had the authority and rule.' Words of as large and more express signification than those which were here spoken to St. Peter.

5. Our Lord having thus engaged Peter to a cheerful compliance with the dangers that might attend the discharge and execution of his office, now particularly intimates to him what that fate was that should attend him; telling him, that though when he was young he girt himself, lived at his own pleasure, and went whither he pleased; yet when he was old he should stretch forth his hands, and another should gird and bind him, and lead him whither he had no mind to go; intimating, as the evangelist tells us, 'by what death he should glorify God;' that is, by crucifixion, the martyrdom which he afterward underwent. And then, rising up, commanded him to follow him; by this bodily attendance mystically implying his conformity to the death of Christ, that he should follow him in dying for the truth and testimony of the gospel. It was not long after that our Lord appeared to them, to take his last farewell of them; when leading them out unto Bethany, a little village upon the mount of Olives, he briefly told them, that they were the persons whom he had chosen to be the witnesses both of his death and resurrection;\* a testimony

<sup>1</sup> Acts, i. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Luke, xxiv. 50.



which they should bear to him in all parts of the world ; in order to which he would, after his ascension, pour out his Spirit upon them in larger measures than they had hitherto received, that they might be the better fortified to grapple with that violent rage and fury wherewith both men and devils would endeavour to oppose them ; and that in the mean time they should return to Jerusalem, and stay till these miraculous powers were from on high conferred upon them. His discourse being ended, laying his hands upon them, he gave them his solemn blessing ; which done, he was immediately taken from them, and being attended with a glorious guard and train of angels, was received up into heaven. Antiquity<sup>1</sup> tells us, that in the place where he last trod upon the rock, the impression of his feet did remain, which could never afterwards be filled up or impaired ; over which Helena, mother of the great Constantine, afterwards built a little chapel, called the Chapel of the Ascension ; in the floor whereof, upon a whitish kind of stone, modern travellers tell us, that the impression of his foot is showed at this day ; but it is that of his right foot only, the other being taken away by the Turks, and, as it is said, kept in the temple at Jerusalem.<sup>2</sup> Our Lord being thus taken from them, the apostles were filled with a greater sense of his glory and majesty than while he was wont familiarly to converse with them ; and having performed their solemn adorations to him, returned

<sup>1</sup> Paulin. Epist. 3, ad Sever. lib. ii. p. 130. Sulpitius Sever. Hist. Sacr. lib. ii. p. 145. Hieron. de loc. Heb. in Act. App. p. 297, tom. iii.

<sup>2</sup> J. Cotovic. Itin. lib. ii. c. 11, p. 271. vid. Sand's Relat. lib. iii. p. 156.

back to Jerusalem, waiting for the promise of the Holy Ghost, which was shortly after conferred upon them. 'They worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.'<sup>1</sup> They who lately were overwhelmed with sorrow at the very mention of their Lord's departure from them, entertained it now with joy and triumph; being fully satisfied of his glorious advancement at God's right hand, and of that particular care and providence which they were sure he would exercise towards them, in pursuance of those great trusts he had committed to them.

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## SECTION VII.

*Of St. Peter's Acts, from our Lord's Ascension till the Dispersion of the Church.*

THE holy Jesus being gone to heaven, the apostles began to act according to the power and commission he had left with them. In order whereunto, the first thing they did after his ascension was to fill up the vacancy in their college, lately made by the unhappy fall and apostacy of Judas. To which end, no sooner were they returned to Jerusalem but they went *εἰς ὑπερῶν*, 'into an upper room.' Where this *ὑπερῶν* was, whether in the house of St. John, or of Mary, John-Mark's mother, or in some of the out-rooms belonging to the temple, (for the temple had over the cloisters several chambers for the service of the priests and

<sup>1</sup> Luke, xxiv. 52.

levites, and as repositories where the consecrated vessels and utensils of the temple were laid up; though it be not probable that the Jews, and especially the priests, would suffer the apostles and their company to be so near the temple,) I stand not to inquire. It is certain that the Jews usually had their *ὑπερῶα*, private oratories, in the upper parts of their houses, called *עליות*, for the more private exercises of their devotions. Thus Daniel had his *עליות*, his upper chamber,<sup>1</sup> (*τὰ ὑπερῶα* the Seventy render it,) whither he was wont to retire to pray to his God: and Benjamin the Jew tells us, that in his time (Ann. Christ. 1172) the Jews at Babylon were wont to pray both in their synagogues, *ועליות דניאל*, “and in that ancient upper chamber of Daniel, which the prophet himself built.”<sup>2</sup> Such an *ὑπερῶον*, or upper chamber, was that wherein St. Paul preached at Troas;<sup>3</sup> and such probably this where the apostles were now met together; and in all likelihood the same where our Lord had lately kept the passover, where the apostles and the church were assembled on the day of Pentecost, and which was then the usual place of their religious assemblies, as we have elsewhere observed more at large.<sup>4</sup> Here the church being met, to the number of about a hundred and twenty, Peter, as president of the assembly, began to speak; and, applying himself to the whole congregation, proposed to them the choice of a new apostle. And it is the remark which St. Chrysostom makes upon this passage,<sup>5</sup> that Peter herein

<sup>1</sup> Dan. vi. 20.    <sup>2</sup> Benj. Itin. p. 76.    <sup>3</sup> Acts, xx. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Primitive Christianity, part. i. ch. 6, p. 126.

<sup>5</sup> Homil. iii. in Act. p. 28.

would do nothing without the common consent and approbation, *οὐδὲν αὐθεντικῶς, οὐδὲ ἀρχικῶς*, assuming no peculiar supereminent power and authority to himself. He put them in mind that Judas, one of our Lord's apostles, being betrayed by his own covetous and insatiable mind, had lately fallen from the honour of his place and ministry :<sup>1</sup> that this was no more than what the prophet had long since foretold should come to pass; and that the rule and oversight in the church, which had been committed to him, should be devolved upon another; that therefore it was highly necessary that one should be substituted in his room, and especially such a one as had been familiarly conversant with our Saviour, from first to last, that so he might be a competent witness both of his doctrine and miracles, his life and death, but especially of his resurrection from the dead. For seeing no evidence is so valid and satisfactory as the testimony of an eye-witness, the apostles all along mainly insisted on this, that they delivered no other things concerning our Saviour to the world than what they themselves had seen and heard. And seeing this rising from the dead was a principle likely to meet with a great deal of opposition, and which would hardliest gain belief and entertainment with the minds of men, therefore they principally urged this at every turn, that 'they were eye-witnesses of his resurrection,' that they had seen, felt, eaten, and familiarly conversed with him after his return from the grave. That therefore such an apostle might be chosen, two candidates were proposed, Joseph, called Barsabas, and Matthias. And having

<sup>1</sup> Acts, i. 15.

prayed that the divine Providence would immediately guide and direct the choice, they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, who was accordingly admitted into the number of the twelve apostles.

2. Fifty days since the last passover being now run out, made way for the feast of pentecost;<sup>1</sup> at what time the great promise of the Holy Ghost was fully made good unto them. The Christian assembly being met together for the public services of their worship, on a sudden a sound like that of a mighty wind rushed in upon them; representing the powerful efficacy of that divine Spirit that was now to be communicated to them: after which there appeared little flames of fire, which, in the fashion of cloven tongues, not only descended, but sat upon each of them; probably to note their perpetual enjoyment of this gift upon all occasions, that when necessary they should never be without it: not like the prophetic gifts of old, which were conferred but sparingly, and only at some particular times and seasons. As the 'seventy elders prophesied and ceased not';<sup>2</sup> but it was only at such times 'as the Spirit came down and rested upon them.' Hereupon they were all immediately filled with the Holy Ghost, which enabled them in an instant to speak several languages which they had never learned, and probably never heard of, together with other miraculous gifts and powers. Thus as the confounding of languages became a curse to the old world, separating men from all mutual offices of kindness and commerce, rendering one part of mankind barbarians to another; so here, the multiplying of languages became a blessing,

<sup>1</sup> Acts, ii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Numb. xi. 25.

being intended as the means to bring men of all nations 'into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God ;' into the fellowship of that religion that would banish discords, cement differences, and unite men's hearts in the bond of peace. The report of so sudden and strange an action presently spread itself into all corners of the city, and there being at that time at Jerusalem multitudes of Jewish proselytes, 'devout men out of every nation under heaven, Parthians, Medes, Elamites, (or Persians,) the dwellers in Mesopotamia and Judæa, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Asia Minor, from Phrygia and Pamphylia, from Egypt and the parts of Libya and Cyrene, from Rome, from Crete, from Arabia, Jews and proselytes, (probably drawn thither by the general report and expectation which had spread itself over all the eastern parts,' and in a manner over all places of the Roman empire, of the Jewish Messiah that about this time should be born at Jerusalem,) they no sooner heard of it, but universally flocked to this Christian assembly ; where they were amazed to hear these Galileans speaking to them in their own native languages, so various, so vastly different from one another. And it could not but exceedingly increase the wonder, to reflect upon the meanness and inconsiderableness of the persons, neither assisted by natural parts, nor polished by education, nor improved by use and custom ; which three things philosophers require to render a man accurate and extraordinary in any art or disci-

<sup>1</sup> " Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinio, esse in fatiis, ut eo tempore Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Id de imperatore," &c.—Sueton. in Vit. Vespas. c. 4, p. 728, eadem habet Tacitus Hist. lib. v. c. 13, p. 540.

pline, φύσις γὰρ ἄνευ μαθήσεως τυφλὸν· μάθησις δίχα φύσεως ἑλλιπὲς· ἀσκησις χωρὶς ἀμφοῖν ἀτελὲς, says Plutarch:<sup>1</sup> "Natural disposition without instruction is blind; instruction without a genius and disposition is defective; and exercise without both is lame and imperfect." Whereas these disciples had not one of these to set them off; their parts were mean, below the rate of the common people; the Galileans being generally accounted the rudest and most stupid of the whole Jewish nation: their education had been no higher than to catch fish, and to mend nets; nor had they been used to plead causes, or to deliver themselves before great assemblies; but spoke on a sudden, not premeditated discourses, not idle stories, or wild roving fancies, but the great and admirable works of God, and the mysteries of the gospel, beyond human apprehensions to find out; and this delivered in almost all the languages of the then known world. Men were severally affected with it, according to their different tempers and apprehensions. Some admiring, and not knowing what to think of it; others deriding it, said that it was nothing else but the wild raving effect of drunkenness and intemperance. At so wild a rate are men of profane minds wont to talk, when they take upon them to pass their censure in the things of God.

3. Hereupon the apostles rose up, and Peter, in the name of the rest, took this occasion of discoursing to them. He told them that this scandalous slander proceeded from the spirit of malice and falsehood; that their censure was as uncharitable as it was unreasonable; that 'they that are drunken

<sup>1</sup> Περὶ παιδ. ἀλwg· p. 2.

are drunk in the night;’ that it was against nature and custom for men to be in drink so soon, too early for such a suspicion to take place, it being now but about nine of the clock, the hour for morning prayer, till when men even of ordinary sobriety and devotion, on festival days, were wont to fast.<sup>1</sup> That these extraordinary and miraculous passages were but the accomplishment of an ancient prophecy, the fulfilling of what God had expressly foretold should come to pass in the times of the Messiah; that Jesus of Nazareth had evidently approved himself to be the Messiah sent from God by many unquestionable miracles, of which they themselves had been eye-witnesses; and though, by God’s permission, who had determined by this means to bring about the salvation of mankind, they had wickedly crucified and slain him, yet that God had raised him from the dead; that it was not possible he should be holden always under the dominion of the grave; nor was it consistent with the justice and goodness of God, and especially with those divine predictions which had expressly foretold he should rise again from the dead; David having more particularly foretold that his ‘flesh should rest in hope;’ that ‘God would not leave his soul in hell, neither suffer his Holy One to see corruption;’ but ‘would make known to him the ways of life:’ that this prophecy could not be meant concerning David himself, by whom it was spoken, he having many ages since been turned to ashes, his body resolved into rottenness and putrefaction, his tomb yet visible among them, from whence he

<sup>1</sup> Πάντως ἂν εἰς τὰς αἰχώρας, εἰ μὴ τὴν σύνοδον διέλυσεν ἐπελθοῦσα ἕκτη ὥρα· καθ’ ἣν τοῖς σάββασιν ἀριστοποιεῖσθαι νόμιμόν ἐστιν ἡμῶν.—Joseph. de Vit. sua. p. 1020.



never did return; that therefore it must needs have been prophetically spoken concerning Christ, having never been truly fulfilled in any but him, who both died, and was risen again, whereof they were witnesses. Yea, that he was not only risen from the dead, but had ascended into heaven, and, according to David's prediction, 'sat down on God's right hand, until he made his enemies his footstool:' which could not be primarily meant of David, he never having yet bodily ascended into heaven; that therefore the whole house of Israel ought to believe, and take notice, that this very Jesus, whom they had crucified, was the person whom God had appointed to be the Messiah and the Saviour of his church.

4. This discourse, in every part of it, like so many daggers, pierced them to the heart; who thereupon cried out to Peter and his brethren to know what they should do. Peter told them, that there was no other way, than by a hearty and sincere repentance, and a being baptized into the religion of this crucified Saviour, to expiate their guilt, to obtain pardon of sin, and the gifts and benefits of the Holy Ghost. That upon these terms the promises of the new covenant, which was ratified by the death of Christ, did belong to them and their children, and to all that should effectually believe and embrace the gospel: farther pressing and persuading them, by doing thus, to save themselves from that unavoidable ruin and destruction, which this wicked and untoward generation of obstinate, unbelieving Jews were shortly to be exposed to. The effects of his preaching were strange and wonderful: 'as many as believed were baptized;' there being 'that day added to the church,' no less than 'three thousand souls.' A quick and plentiful

harvest : the late sufferings of our Saviour, as yet fresh bleeding in their memories, the present miraculous powers of the Holy Ghost, that appeared upon them, the zeal of his auditors, though heretofore misplaced and misguided ; and, above all, the efficacy of divine grace, contributing to this numerous conversion.

5. Though the converting so vast a multitude might justly challenge a place amongst the greatest miracles, yet the apostles began now more particularly to exercise their miraculous power. Peter and John,<sup>1</sup> going up to the temple, about three o'clock in the afternoon, towards the conclusion of one of the solemn hours of prayer, (for the Jews divided their day into four greater hours, each quarter containing three lesser under it, three of which were public and stated times of prayer, instituted (say they) by the three great patriarchs of their nation ; the first, from six o'clock in the morning till nine, called hence ' the third hour of the day,'<sup>2</sup> instituted by Abraham ; this was called תפלת שחרית or morning prayer : the second from nine till twelve, called ' the sixth hour,' and this hour of prayer ordained by Isaac ; this was called תפלת צהריים or ' mid-day prayer : ' the third, from twelve to three in the afternoon, called ' the ninth hour,' appointed by Jacob, called תפלת ערבית or ' evening prayer ; ' ) and at this hour it was, that these two apostles went up to the temple, where they found a poor impotent cripple, who, though above forty years old, had been lame from his birth, lying ' at the beautiful gate of the temple,' and asking an alms of them. Peter, earnestly looking

<sup>1</sup> Acts, iii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Drus. in Act. iii.

on him, told him he had no money to give him ; but that he would give him that which was a great deal better, restore him to his health ; and lifting him up by the hand, commanded him, ' in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, to rise up and walk.' The word was no sooner said, than the thing was done : immediately the nerves and sinews were enlarged, and the joints returned to their proper use. The man, standing up, went into the temple, walking, leaping, and praising God. The beholding so sudden and extraordinary a cure, begot great admiration in the minds of the people, whose curiosity drew them to the apostles to see those who had been the authors of it. Which Peter taking notice of, began to discourse to them to this effect : That there was no reason they should wonder at them, as if by their own skill and art they had wrought this cure, it being entirely done in the name of their crucified master, by the power of that very Christ, that holy and just person, whom they themselves had denied, and delivered up to Pilate, and preferred a rebel and a murderer before him, when his judge was resolved to acquit him : and that though they had put him to death, yet that they were witnesses, that God had raised him up again, and that he was gone to heaven, where he must remain till the times of the general restitution. That he presumed that this in them, as also in their rulers, was, in a great measure, the effect of ignorance, and the not being thoroughly convinced of the greatness and divinity of his person ; which yet God made use of for the bringing about his wise and righteous designs, the accomplishing of what he had foretold concerning Christ's person and sufferings, by Moses and

Samuel, and all 'the holy prophets which had been since the world began.' That therefore it was now high time for them to repent and turn to God, that their great wickedness might be expiated, and that when Christ should shortly come in judgment upon the Jewish nation, that might be a time of comfort and refreshing to them, which would be one of vengeance and destruction to other men: that they were the peculiar persons to whom the blessings of the promises did primarily appertain, and unto whom God, in the first place, sent his Son, that he might derive his blessing upon them, by 'turning them away from their iniquities.' While Peter was thus discoursing to the people in one place, we may suppose that John was preaching to them in another; and the success was answerable: the apostles cast out the seed, and God immediately 'gave the increase.' There being, by this means, no fewer than five thousand brought over to the faith:<sup>1</sup> though it is possible the whole body of believers might be comprehended in that number.

6. While the apostles were thus preaching, the priests and Sadducees<sup>2</sup> (who particularly appeared in this business, as being enemies to all tumults, or whatever might disturb their present ease and quiet, the only portion of happiness they expected; besides that they hated Christianity, because so expressly asserting the resurrection,) being vexed to hear this doctrine vented amongst the people, intimated to the magistrate, that this concourse might probably tend to an uproar and insurrection; whereupon they came with the captain of the temple, (commander of the tower of Antonia, which

<sup>1</sup> Acts, iv. 4.<sup>2</sup> Verse 1.

stood close by, on the north side of the temple; wherein was a Roman garrison to prevent or suppress, especially at festival times, popular tumults and uproars,) who seized on the apostles, and put them into prison. The next day they were convened before the Jewish Sanhedrim; and being asked by what power and authority they had done this, Peter resolutely answered, that as to the cure done to this impotent person, it should be known to them and all the Jews, that it was perfectly wrought in the name of that Jesus of Nazareth whom they themselves had crucified, and God had raised from the dead; and whom, though they had thrown him by as waste and rubbish, yet God had made 'head of the corner;' and that there was no other way wherein they, or others, could expect salvation, but by this crucified Saviour. Great was the boldness of the apostles, admired by the Sanhedrim itself, in this matter; especially if we consider that this probably was the very court that had so lately sentenced and condemned their master; and being fleshed in such sanguinary proceedings, had no other way but to go on and justify one cruelty by another: that the apostles did not say these things in corners and behind the curtain, but to their very faces, and that in the open court of judicature, and before all the people. That the apostles had not been used to plead in such public places, nor had been polished with the arts of education, but were ignorant, unlearned men, known not to be versed in the study of the Jewish law.

7. The council (which all this while had beheld them with a kind of wonder, and now remembered that they had been the companions and attendants of the late crucified Jesus) commanded them to

withdraw; and debated amongst themselves what they should do with them. The miracle they could not deny, the fact being so plain and evident; and therefore resolved strictly to charge them that they should preach no more in the name of Jesus. Being called in again, they acquainted them with the resolution of the council; to which Peter and John replied, that they could by no means yield obedience to it; appealing to themselves, whether it was not more fit that they should 'obey God rather than' them: and that they could not but 'testify what they had seen and heard.' Nor did they in this answer make any undue reflection upon the power of the magistrates, and the obedience due to them; it being a ruled case, by the first dictates of reason, and the common vote and suffrage of mankind, that parents and governors are not to be obeyed when their commands interfere with the obligations under which we stand to a superior power.<sup>1</sup> All authority is originally derived from God, and our duty to him may not be superseded by the laws of any authority deriving from him. And even Socrates himself, in a parallel instance, when persuaded to leave off his excellent way of institution and instructing youth, and to comply with the humour of his Athenian judges to save his life, returned this answer: "That

<sup>1</sup> Τὸ μὲν ἀπειθεῖν, καὶ ὁ ἀπειθής, λοιδορία ἐστὶ καὶ ὀνειδος· τὸ δὲ μὴ πράττειν ἢ μὴ χρῆ, οὐκ ὀνειδος, ἀλλ' ἐπαινος. ὥςτε εἴτε πατὴρ, εἴτε ἄρχοντας, εἴτε καὶ νῆ Δία δεσπότες προστάγματι μὴ ὑπαγογεῖ τις κακὰ προσάττοντος, ἢ ἄδικα ἢ αἰσχρὰ, οὐκ ἀπειθεῖ οὐδαμῶς, ὥσπερ οὐδὲ ἀδικεῖ, οὐδὲ ἀμαρτάνει· ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνος ἀπειθεῖ μόνος, ὁ τῶν εὐ καλῶς καὶ συμφερόντως προσαττομένων, ἀφροντιστῶν καὶ παρακούων· ὁ μὲν οὖν ἀπειθής, τοιοῦτός τις ἐστίν.—Muson. apud Stob. Serm. 77, de honor. et obed. parent. debit. p 458, ubi pluribus strenuè et eleganter hac de re disserit.

indeed he loved and honoured the Athenians, but yet resolved to obey God rather than them.”<sup>1</sup> An answer almost the same, both in substance and words, with that which was here given by our apostles. In all other cases, where the laws of the magistrate did not interfere with the commands of Christ, none more loyal, none more compliant than they. As, indeed, no religion in the world ever secured the interests of civil authority like the religion of the gospel. It positively charges ‘every soul,’ of what rank or condition soever, ‘to be subject to the higher powers,’ as a divine ordinance and institution; and that ‘not for wrath only, but for conscience’ sake:’ it ‘puts men in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and obey magistrates; to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, both to the king as supreme, and unto governors as unto them that are sent by him; for so is the will of God.’ So far is it from allowing us to violate their persons, that it suffers us not boldly to censure their actions, ‘to revile the gods, despise dominions, and speak evil of dignities;’ or to vilify and injure them so much as by a dishonourable thought; commanding us, when we cannot obey, to suffer the most rigorous penalties imposed upon us with calmness, and ‘to possess our souls with patience.’ Thus when these two apostles were shortly after again summoned before the council, commanded no more to preach the Christian doctrine, and to be scourged for what they had done already, though they could not obey the one, they

<sup>1</sup> Εἰ οὖν με (ὅπερ εἶπον) ἐπὶ τούτοις ἀφίαιτε, εἰπομὶ ἂν ὑμῖν, ὅτι ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ὡς ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι ἀσπάζομαι μὲν καὶ φιλω, πείσωμαι δὲ τῷ Θεῷ μᾶλλον ἢ ὑμῖν.—Socr. in Apol. apud Plat. n. 11, . 25.

cheerfully submitted to the other, without any peevish or tart reflections, but went away rejoicing. But what the carriage of Christians was in this matter, in the first and best ages of the gospel, we have in another place<sup>1</sup> sufficiently discovered to the world. We may not withhold our obedience, till the magistrate invades God's throne, and countermands his authority; and may then appeal to the sense of mankind, whether it be not most reasonable that God's authority should first take place, as the apostles here appealed to their very judges themselves. Nor do we find that the Sanhedrim did except against the plea. At least, whatever they thought, yet not daring to punish them for fear of the people, they only threatened them, and let them go: who thereupon presently returned to the rest of the apostles and believers.

8. The church exceedingly multiplied by these means: and that so great a company, most whereof were poor, might be maintained, they generally sold their estates, and brought the money to the apostles, to be by them deposited in one common treasury, and thence distributed according to the several exigencies of the church; which gave occasion to this dreadful instance: Ananias and his wife Sapphira,<sup>2</sup> having taken upon them the profession of the gospel, according to the free and generous spirit of those times, had consecrated and devoted their estate to the honour of God; and the necessities of the church; and accordingly sold their possessions, and turned them into money. But as they were willing to gain the reputation of charitable persons, so were they loath wholly to cast

<sup>1</sup> Primitive Christianity, part iii. ch. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Acts, v. 1.



themselves upon the Divine Providence, by letting go all at once; and therefore privately withheld part of what they had devoted, and bringing the rest, laid it at the apostles' feet; hoping herein they might deceive the apostles, though immediately guided by the Spirit of God. But Peter, at his first coming in, treated Ananias with these sharp inquiries: why he would suffer satan to fill his heart with so big a wickedness, as by keeping back of his estate, 'to think to deceive the Holy Ghost?' That before it was sold it was wholly at his own disposal; and after, it was perfectly in his own power fully to have performed his vow: so that it was capable of no other interpretation, than that herein he had not only abused and injured men, but mocked God, and, what in him lay, lied to, and cheated the Holy Ghost; who, he knew, was privy to the most secret thoughts and purposes of his heart. This was no sooner said, but suddenly, to the great terror and amazement of all that were present, Ananias was arrested with a stroke from heaven, and fell down dead to the ground. Not long after, his wife came in, whom Peter entertained with the same severe reproofs wherewith he had addressed her husband; adding, that the like sad fate and doom should immediately seize upon her; who thereupon dropped down dead: thus, as she had been co-partner with him in the sin, becoming sharer with him in the punishment. An instance of great severity, filling all that heard of it with fear and terror, and acting as a seasonable prevention of that hypocrisy and dissimulation wherewith many might possibly think to have imposed upon the church.

9. This severe case being extraordinary, the apostles usually exerted their power in such mira-

cles as were more useful and beneficial to the world; curing all manner of diseases, and disposing devils; insomuch that they brought the sick into the streets, and laid them upon beds and couches, that at least Peter's shadow, as he passed by, might come upon them.<sup>1</sup> These astonishing miracles could not but mightily contribute to the propagation of the gospel, and convince the world that the apostles were more considerable persons than they took them for; poverty and meanness being no bar to true worth and greatness. And, methinks, Erasmus's reflection<sup>2</sup> is here not unseasonable: that no honour or sovereignty, no power or dignity was comparable to this glory of the apostle; that the things of Christ, though in another way, were more noble and excellent than any thing that this world could afford. And therefore he tells us, that when he beheld the state and magnificence wherewith pope Julius II. appeared, first at Bononia and then at Rome, equalling the triumphs of a Pompey or a Cæsar, he could not but think how much all this was below the greatness and majesty of St. Peter; who converted the world, not by power or armies, not by engines or artifices of pomp and grandeur, but by faith in the power of Christ, and drew it to the admiration of himself: and the same state (says he) would no doubt attend the apostles' successors, were they men of the same temper and holiness of life. The Jewish rulers, alarmed with this news, and awakened with the growing numbers of the church, send to apprehend the apostles, and cast them into prison. But God, who is never wanting to his own cause, dispatched

<sup>1</sup> Acts, v. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Annot. in loc.

that night an angel from heaven to open the prison doors, commanding them to repair to the temple, and to the exercise of their ministry ; which they did early in the morning, and there taught the people. How unsuccessful are the projects of the wisest statesmen, when God frowns upon them ! how little do any counsels against heaven prosper ! In vain is it to shut the doors where God is resolved to open them : the firmest bars, the strongest chains cannot hold, when once God has designed and decreed our liberty. The officers returning the next morning, found the prison shut and guarded, but the prisoners gone : wherewith they acquainted the council, who much wondered at it ; but being told where the apostles were, they sent to bring them, without any noise or violence, before the Sanhedrim ; where the high-priest asked them how they durst go on to propagate that doctrine, which they had so strictly commanded them not to preach ? Peter, in the name of the rest, told them that they must in this case ‘obey God rather than men :’ that though they had so barbarously and contumeliously treated the Lord Jesus, yet that God had raised him up, and exalted him to be ‘a Prince and a Saviour,’ to give both ‘repentance and remission of sins :’ that they were witnesses of these things, and so were those miraculous powers which the Holy Ghost conferred upon all true Christians. Vexed was the council with this answer, and began to consider how to cut them off. But Gamaliel, a grave and learned senator, having commanded the apostles to withdraw, bade the council take heed what they did to them ; putting them in mind, that several persons had heretofore raised parties and factions, and drawn

vast numbers after them, but that they had miscarried, and they and their designs come to nought: that therefore they should do well to let these men alone: that if their doctrines and designs were merely human, they would, in time, of themselves fall to the ground; but if they were of God, it was not all their power and policies would be able to defeat and overturn them; and that they themselves would herein appear to oppose the councils and designs of heaven: with this prudent and rational advice they were satisfied; and having commanded the apostles to be scourged, and charged them no more to preach this doctrine, restored them to their liberty: who, notwithstanding this charge and threatening, returned home in a kind of triumph, that they were accounted worthy to suffer in so good a cause, and to undergo shame and reproach for the sake of so good a master. Nor could all the hard usage they met with from men discourage them in their duty to God, or make them less zealous and diligent both publicly and privately to preach Christ in every place.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Πῶς οὖν ἀναβαίνεις νῦν; ὡς μάρτυς ὑπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ κεκλημένος· ἔρχε σὺ, ἃ μαρτύρησόν μοι· σὺ γὰρ ἄξιος εἰ προαχθῆναι μάρτυς ὑπ' ἐμοῦ· ἐν δεινοῖς εἰμι, κύριε, ἃ δυστυχῶ, οὐδεὶς μὲ ἐπιστρέφεται, οὐδεὶς μοι δίδωσιν οὐδέν, πάντες ψέγῃσι, πάντες κακολογοῦσι. ταῦτα μέλεις μαρτυρεῖν, ἃ κατασχύνειν, τὴν κλῆσιν, ἣν ἐκέληκεν, ὅτι σε ἐτίμησε τοιαύτην τιμὴν, ἃ ἄξιον ἡγήσατο προσαγαγεῖν εἰς μαρτυρίαν τηλικαύτην.—Arrian. Dissert. lib. i. c. 29, p. 163.

## SECTION VIII.

*Of St. Peter's Acts, from the dispersion of the Church at Jerusalem till his contest with St. Paul at Antioch.*

THE church had been hitherto tossed with gentle storms; but now a more violent tempest overtook it, which began in the proto-martyr Stephen,<sup>1</sup> and was more vigorously carried on afterwards; by occasion whereof the disciples were dispersed. And God, who always brings good out of evil, hereby provided that the gospel should not be confined only to Jerusalem. Hitherto the church had been crowded up within the city walls, and the religion had crept up and down in private corners; but the professors of it, being now dispersed abroad by the malice and cruelty of their enemies, carried Christianity along with them, and propagated it into the neighbour countries; accomplishing hereby an ancient prophecy, that 'out of Sion should go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.' Thus God overrules the malice of men, and makes intended poison to become food or physic. That Divine Providence that governs the world, more particularly superintends the affairs and interests of his church, so that no weapon formed against Israel shall prosper; curses shall be turned into blessings, and that become an eminent means to enlarge and propagate the gospel, which they designed as the

<sup>1</sup> Acts, viii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Isaiah, ii. 3.

only way to suppress and stifle it. Amongst those that were scattered, Philip the deacon was driven down unto Samaria, where he preached the gospel, and confirmed his preaching by many miraculous cures, and dispossessing devils. In this city there was one Simon, who by magic arts and diabolical sorceries sought to advance himself into a great fame and reputation with the people, insomuch that they generally beheld him as the great power of God;<sup>1</sup> for so the ancients tell us he used to style himself; giving out himself to be the first and chiefest Deity, the Father who is God over all: that is, that he was that which in every nation was accounted the supreme Deity. This man, hearing the sermons, and beholding the miracles that were done by Philip, presented himself amongst the numbers of believers, and was baptized with them. The apostles, who yet remained at Jerusalem, having heard of the great success of Philip's ministry at Samaria, thought good to send some of their number to his assistance; and accordingly deputed Peter and John, who came thither: where having prayed for, and laid their hands upon these new converts, they presently received the Holy Ghost. Simon the magician observing, that by laying on of the apostles' hands, miraculous gifts were conferred upon men, offered them a considerable sum of money to invest him with this power, that on whom he laid his hands they might receive the Holy Ghost. Peter, perceiving his rotten and insincere intentions, rejected his impious motion with scorn and detestation: 'Thy money perish with thee.'

<sup>1</sup> Just. Mart. Apol. ii. p. 69. Iren. lib. i. c. 20, p. 115. Tertull, de Præscript. Hæret. c. 46, p. 219.

He told him that his heart was naught and hypocritical; that he could have no share nor portion in so great a privilege; that it more concerned him to repent of so great a wickedness, and sincerely seek to God, that so the thought of his heart might be forgiven him; for that he perceived that he had a very vicious and corrupt temper and constitution of mind, and was as yet bound up under a very wretched and miserable state, displeasing to God, and dangerous to himself. The conscience of the man was a little startled with this, and he prayed the apostles to intercede with heaven, that God would pardon his sin, and that none of these things might fall upon him. But how little cure this wrought upon him we shall find elsewhere, when we shall again meet with him afterwards. The apostles having thus confirmed the church at Samaria, and preached up and down in the villages thereabouts, returned back to Jerusalem, to join their counsel and assistance to the rest of the apostles.

2. The storm, though violent, being at length blown over, the church enjoyed a time of great calmness and serenity; during which Peter went out to visit the churches lately planted in those parts, by those disciples who had been dispersed by the persecution at Jerusalem. Coming down to Lydda, the first thing he did was to work a cure upon one Æneas, who being crippled with the palsy, had lain bedrid for eight years together. Peter coming to him, bade him in the name of Christ to arise; and the man was immediately restored to perfect health.<sup>1</sup> A miracle that was not confined only to his person, but being known abroad, generally

<sup>1</sup> Acts, ix. 32—34.

brought over the inhabitants of that place. The fame of this miracle having flown to Joppa, a sea-port town some six miles thence, the Christians there presently sent for Peter on this occasion. Tabitha, whose Greek name was Dorcas, a woman venerable for her piety and diffusive charity, was newly dead, to the great lamentation of all good men, and much more to the loss of the poor that had been relieved by her. Peter, coming to the house, found her dressed up for her funeral solemnity, and compassed about with the sorrowful widows, who showed the coats and garments where-with she had clothed them, the badges of her charitable liberality. Peter, shutting all out, kneeled down and prayed; and then turning him to the body, commanded her to arise; and lifting her up by the hand, presented her in perfect health to her friends and those that were about her; by which he confirmed many, and converted more to the faith. After which he staid some considerable time at Joppa, lodging in the house of Simon a tanner.

3. While he abode in this city, retiring one morning to the house-top to pray,<sup>1</sup> (as the Jews frequently did, having thence a free and open prospect towards Jerusalem and the temple,) it being now near noon, which was the conclusion of one of their stated times of prayer, he found himself hungry, and called for meat; but while it was preparing, he himself fell into a trance, wherein was represented to him a large sheet let down from heaven, containing all sorts of creatures, clean and unclean; a voice at the same time calling to him,

<sup>1</sup> Acts, x. 9.



that he should rise, kill freely, and indifferently feed upon them. Peter, tenacious as yet of the rites and institutions of the Mosaic law, rejoined, that he could not do it, having never eaten anything that was common or unclean. To which the voice replied, that what God had cleansed he should not account or call common. Which being done thrice, the vessel was again taken up into heaven, and the vision presently disappeared. By this symbolic representment, though Peter at present knew not what to make of it, God was teaching him a new lesson, and preparing him to go upon an errand and embassy, which the Spirit at the same time expressly commanded him to undertake. While he was in this doubtful posture of mind, three messengers knocked at the door, inquiring for him; from whom he received this account: that Cornelius, a Roman, captain of a band of Italian soldiers at Cæsarea, a person of great piety and religion, (being of the proselytes at the gate, who though not observing an exact conformity to the rites of the Mosaic law, did yet maintain some general correspondence with it, and lived under the obligation of the seven precepts of the sons of Noah,) had, by an immediate command from God, sent for him. The next day Peter, accompanied with some of the brethren, went along with them; and the day after they came to Cæsarea: against whose arrival, Cornelius had summoned his friends and kindred to his house. Peter arriving, Cornelius (who was affected with a mighty reverence for so great a person) fell at his feet and worshipped him; a way of address frequent in those eastern countries towards princes and great men, but by the Greeks and Romans appropriated as a peculiar

honour to the gods. Peter, rejecting the honour, as due only to God, entered into the house, where he first made his apology to the company, that though they could not but know, that it was not lawful for a Jew to converse in the duties of religion with those of another nation, yet that now God had taught him another lesson. And then proceeded particularly to inquire the reason of Cornelius's sending for him. Whereupon Cornelius told him, that four days since, being conversant in the duties of fasting and prayer, an angel had appeared to him, and told him, that his prayers and alms were come up for a memorial before God; that he should send to Joppa for one Simon Peter, who lodged in a tanner's house by the sea-side, who should further make known his mind to him; that accordingly he sent, and being now come, they were there met to hear what he had to say to them. Where we see, that though God sent an angel to Cornelius to acquaint him with his will, yet the angel was only to direct him to the apostle for instruction in the faith; which no doubt was done, partly that God might put the greater honour upon an institution that was likely to meet with contempt and scorn enough from the world; partly to let us see that we are not to expect extraordinary and miraculous ways of teaching and information, where God affords ordinary means.

4. Hereupon Peter began this discourse; that by comparing things it was now plain and evident, that the partition wall was broken down; that God had no longer a particular kindness for nations and persons; that it was not the nation, but the religion; not the outward quality of the man, but the inward temper of the mind, that recommends men

to God ; that the devout and the pious, the righteous and the good man, wherever he be, is equally dear to heaven ; that God has as much respect for a just and virtuous person in the wilds of Scythia, as upon mount Sion :<sup>1</sup> that the reconciling and making peace between God and man by Jesus Christ, was the doctrine published by the prophets of old ; and of late, since the times of John, preached through Galilee and Judea : viz., that God had anointed and consecrated Jesus of Nazareth with divine powers and graces, in the exercise whereof he constantly went about to do good to men : that they had seen all he had done amongst the Jews ; whom though they had slain and crucified, yet that God had raised him again the third day, and had openly showed him to his apostles and followers, whom he had chosen to be his peculiar witnesses, and whom to that end he had admitted to eat and drink with him after his resurrection, commanding them to preach the gospel to mankind, and to testify, that he was the person whom God had ordained to be the great judge of the world : that all the prophets with one consent bore witness of him ; that this Jesus is he, in whose name whosoever believes, should certainly receive remission of sins. While Peter was thus preaching to them, the Holy Ghost fell upon a great part of his auditory, enabling them to speak several languages, and therein to magnify the giver of them. Whereat the Jews who came along with Peter did sufficiently wonder, to see that the gifts of the Holy Ghost

<sup>1</sup> " Vos estis templum Domini, et Spiritus Sanctus habitat in vobis. Et de Hierosolymis et de Britannia æqualiter patet aula celestis. Regnum enim Dei intra vos est."—Hieronym. ad Paulin. p. 102, tom. i.

should be poured upon the Gentiles. Peter seeing this, told the company, that he knew no reason why these persons should not be baptized, having received the Holy Ghost as well as they; and accordingly commanded them to be baptized: for whose further confirmation he staid some time longer with them. This act of Peter's made a great noise amongst the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem,<sup>1</sup> who, being lately converted from their Judaism, were as yet zealous for the religion of their country; and therefore severely charged Peter at his return, for his too familiar conversing with the Gentiles. See here the powerful prejudice of education. The Jews had for several ages conceived a radicated and inveterate prejudice against the Gentiles. Indeed the law of Moses commanded them to be peculiarly kind to their own nation; and the rites and institutions of their religion, and the peculiar form of their commonwealth, made them different from the fashion of other countries; a separation which, in after times, they drew into a narrower compass. Besides, they were mightily puffed up with their external privileges, that they were 'the seed of Abraham,' the people whom God had peculiarly chosen for himself, above all other nations in the world; and therefore, with a lofty scorn, proudly rejected the Gentiles as dogs and reprobates; utterly refusing to show them any office of common kindness and converse. We find the heathens frequently charging them with this rudeness and inhumanity. Juvenal<sup>2</sup> accuses them, that they would not show a traveller the right way, nor give him a draught of water, if he were not of

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xi. 1.<sup>2</sup> Satyr. p. 439.

their religion. Tacitus<sup>1</sup> tells us, that they had *adversus omnes alios hostile odium*, "a bitter hatred of all other people." Haman<sup>2</sup> represented them to Ahasuerus, as ἔθνος ἄμικτον, ἄσύμφυλον, &c. "A people that would never kindly mix and correspond with any other; as different in their manners as in their laws and religion from other nations." The friends of Antiochus (as the historian reports<sup>3</sup>) charged them *μόνους ἀπάντων ἐθνῶν ἀκοινωνήτους εἶναι τῆς πρὸς ἄλλο ἔθνος ἐπιμιξίας, καὶ πολεμίους ὑπολαμβάνειν πάντας, μηδενὶ ἄλλῳ ἔθνει τραπέζης κοινωνεῖν τὸ παράπαν, μηδὲ ἐννοεῖν*: "That they alone of all others were the most unsociable people under heaven; that they held no converse or correspondence with any other, but accounted them as their mortal enemies: that they would not eat nor drink with men of another nation, no nor so much as wish well to them; their ancestors having leavened them with an hatred of all mankind." This was their humour: and that the Gentiles herein did not wrong them, is sufficiently evident from their ordinary practice, and is openly avowed by their own writings.<sup>4</sup> Nay, at their first coming over to Christianity, though one great design of it was to soften the manners of men, and to oblige them to a more extensive and universal charity, yet could they hardly quit this common prejudice; quarrelling with Peter for no other reason, but that he had eaten and drunken with the Gentiles; inso-much that he was forced to apologize for himself, and to justify his actions as immediately done by

<sup>1</sup> Hist. lib. v. c. 4, 5, p. 535.

<sup>2</sup> Ap. Joseph. Antiq. Jud. lib. xi. c. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Diodor. Sicul. lib. xxxiv. apud Phot. Cod. 244, Col. 1149.

<sup>4</sup> Vid. Maimon. in תפלה cap. 12, et in Gezelah, c. 11.

divine warrant and authority. And then, no sooner had he given them a naked and impartial account of the whole transaction, from first to last, but they presently turned their displeasure against him into thanks to God, that had granted to the Gentiles also repentance unto life.

5. It was now about the end of Caligula's reign, when Peter, having finished his visitation of the new planted churches, was returned to Jerusalem. Not long after, Herod Agrippa,<sup>1</sup> grandchild to Herod the Great, having attained the kingdom, the better to ingratiate himself with the people, had lately put St. James to death. And finding that this gratified the vulgar, resolved to send Peter the same way after him. In order whereunto he apprehended him, cast him into prison, and set strong guards to watch him : the church in the mean time being very instant and importunate with heaven for his life and safety. The night before his intended execution, God purposely sent an angel from heaven, who coming to the prison, found him fast asleep between two of his keepers. So soft and secure a pillow is a good conscience, even in the confines of death, and the greatest danger. The angel raised him up, knocked off his chains, bade him gird on his garments and follow him. He did so ; and having passed the first and second watch, and entered through the iron gate into the city, (which opened to them of its own accord,) after having passed through one street more, the angel departed from him. By this time Peter came to himself, and perceived that it was no vision, but a reality that had happened to him. Whereupon he

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xii. 1.

came to Mary's house, where the church were met together at prayer for him. Knocking at the door, the maid who came to let him in, perceiving it was his voice, ran back to tell them that Peter was at the door; which they at first looked upon as nothing but the effect of a fright or fancy; but she still affirming it, they concluded that it was his angel, or some peculiar messenger sent from him. The door being opened, they were strangely amazed at the sight of him; but he briefly told them the manner of his deliverance, and charging them to acquaint the brethren with it, presently withdrew into another place. It is easy to imagine what a bustle and stir there was the next morning among the keepers of the prison, with whom Herod was so much displeased, that he commanded them to be put to death.

6. Some time after this it happened, that a controversy arising between the Jewish and the Gentile converts about the observation of the Mosaic law,<sup>1</sup> the minds of men were exceedingly disquieted and disturbed with it; the Jews zealously contending for circumcision and the observance of the ceremonial law, to be joined with the belief and profession of the gospel, as equally necessary to salvation. To compose this difference, the best expedient that could be thought on, was to call a general council of the apostles and brethren, to meet together at Jerusalem; which was done accordingly, and the case thoroughly scanned and canvassed. At last Peter stood up, and acquainted the synod, that God having made choice of him among all the apostles, to be the first that preached the gospel to

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xv. 1.

the Gentiles, God, who was best able to judge of the hearts of men, had borne witness to them, that they were accepted of him, by giving them his Holy Spirit, as well as he had done to the Jews; having put no difference between the one and the other. That therefore it was a tempting and provoking God, to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither they themselves nor their fathers were able to bear; there being ground enough to believe, that the Gentiles as well as the Jews should be saved by the grace of the gospel. After some other of the apostles had declared their judgments in the case, it was unanimously decreed, that except the temporary observance of some few particular things, equally convenient both for Jew and Gentile, no other burden should be imposed upon them: and so the decrees of the council being drawn up into a synodical epistle, were sent abroad to the several churches, for allaying the heats and controversies that had been raised about this matter.

7. Peter, awhile after the celebration of the council, left Jerusalem, and came down to Antioch,<sup>1</sup> where using the liberty which the gospel had given him, he familiarly eat and conversed with the Gentile converts; accounting them, now that 'the partition wall was broken down,' no longer 'strangers' and 'foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God:' this he had been taught by the vision of the sheet let down from heaven; this had been lately decreed, and he himself had promoted and subscribed it in the synod at Jerusalem; this he had before practised towards Cornelius and

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 11.



his family, and justified the action to the satisfaction of his accusers; and this he had here freely and innocently done at Antioch, till some of the Jewish brethren coming thither, for fear of offending and displeasing them, he withdrew his converse with the Gentiles, as if it had been unlawful for him to hold communion with uncircumcised persons; when yet he knew, and was fully satisfied, that our Lord had wholly removed all difference, and broken down the wall of separation between Jew and Gentile. In which affair, as he himself acted against the light of his own mind and judgment, condemning what he had approved, and destroying what he had before built up; so hereby he confirmed the Jewish zealots in their inveterate error, cast infinite scruples into the minds of the Gentiles, filling their consciences with fears and dissatisfactions, reviving the old feuds and prejudices between Jew and Gentile; by which means many others were ensnared; yea, the whole number of Jewish converts followed his example, separating themselves from the company of the Gentile Christians. Yea, so far did it spread, that Barnabas himself was carried away with the stream and torrent of this unwarrantable practice. St. Paul, who was at this time come to Antioch, unto whom Peter gave 'the right hand of fellowship,' acknowledging his apostleship of the circumcision, observing these evil and unevangelical actings, resolutely withstood Peter to the face, and publicly reprov'd him, as a person worthy to be blamed for his gross prevarication in this matter; severely expostulating and reasoning with him, that he who was himself a Jew, and thereby under a more immediate obligation to the Mosaic law, should cast off that yoke

himself, and yet endeavour to impose it upon the Gentiles, who were not in the least under any obligation to it. A smart, but an impartial charge: and indeed so remarkable was this carriage of St. Paul towards our apostle, that though it set things right for the present, yet it made some noise abroad in the word. Yes, Porphyry himself,<sup>1</sup> that acute and subtile enemy of Christianity, makes use of it as an argument against them both; charging the one with error and falsehood, and the other with rudeness and incivility; and that the whole was but a compact of forgery and deceit, while the princes of the church did thus fall out among themselves. And so sensible were some of this, in the first ages of Christianity, that rather than such a dishonour and disgrace, as they accounted it, should be reflected upon Peter, they tell us of two several Cephas's, one the apostle, the other one of the seventy disciples; and that it was the last of these that was guilty of this prevarication, and whom St. Paul so vigorously resisted and reprov'd at Antioch. But for this plausible and well-meant evasion the champions of the Romish church con them no great thanks at this day. Nay, St. Jerome long since fully confuted it in his notes upon this place.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Apud Hieron. Præm. in Ep. ad Gal. p. 159.

<sup>2</sup> Hieron. Com. in Gal. ii. p. 168.

## SECTION IX.

*Of St. Peter's Acts, from the end of the Sacred Story till his Martyrdom.*

HITHERTO, in drawing up the life of this great apostle, we have had an infallible guide to conduct and lead us; but the sacred story breaking off here, forces us to look abroad, and to pick up what memoirs the ancients have left us in this matter; which we shall for the main digest according to the order wherein Baronius, and other ecclesiastic writers have disposed the series of St. Peter's life; reserving what is justly questionable, to a more particular examination afterward. And that we may present the account more entire and perfect, we must step back a little in point of time, that so we may go forward with greater advantage. We are to know, therefore, that during the time of peace and calmness which the church enjoyed after Saul's persecution, when St. Peter went down to visit the churches, he is said to have gone to Antioch, where great numbers of Jews inhabited, and there to have planted the Christian faith. That he founded a church here Eusebius expressly tells us;<sup>1</sup> and by others<sup>2</sup> it is said, that he himself was the first bishop of this see. Sure I am that St. Chrysostom<sup>3</sup> reckons it one of the greatest honours of that city, that St. Peter staid so long there, and

<sup>1</sup> Chron. ad An. Chr. 43.

<sup>2</sup> Hieron. Comment. in 2 ad Galat. p. 168, tom. ix.

<sup>3</sup> Encom. S. Ignat. Mart. p. 503, tom. i.

that the bishops of it succeeded him in that see. The care and presidency of this church he had between six and seven years. Not that he staid there all that time, but that having ordered and disposed things to the best advantage, he returned to other affairs and exigencies of the church; confirming the new plantation, bringing in Cornelius and his family, and in him the first-fruits of the Gentiles' conversion to the faith of Christ. After which he returned unto Jerusalem, where he was imprisoned by Herod, and miraculously delivered by an angel sent from heaven.

2. What became of Peter after his deliverance out of prison is not certainly known; probably he might preach in some parts a little further distant from Judæa, as we are told he 'did at Byzantium,' and in the countries thereabout (though, I confess, the evidence to me is not convincing.) After this, he resolved upon a journey to Rome; where most agree he arrived about the second year of the emperor Claudius. Orosius<sup>2</sup> tells us, that coming to Rome, he brought prosperity along with him to that city; for besides several other extraordinary advantages which at that time happened to it, this was not the least observable, that Camillus Scribonianus, governor of Dalmatia, soliciting the army to rebel against the emperor, the eagles, their military standard, remained so fast in the ground that no power nor strength was able to pluck them up. With which unusual accident the minds of the soldiers were surprised and startled; and turning their swords against the author of the sedi-

<sup>1</sup> Baron. ad Ann. Chr. 44, numb. 12, vid. Epist. Agap. ad Pet. Hieros. in V. Synod. sub Men. Conc. tom. iv. p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. lib. vii. c. 6, fol. 296, et seq.

tion, continued firm and loyal in their obedience. Whereby a dangerous rebellion was prevented, likely enough otherwise to have broken out. This he ascribes to St. Peter's coming to Rome, and the first plantation of the Christian faith in that city; heaven beginning more particularly to smile upon that place at his first coming thither. It is not to be doubted, but that at his first arrival he disposed himself amongst the Jews his countrymen, who ever since the time of Augustus had dwelt in the region beyond Tiber. But when afterwards he began to preach to the Gentiles, he was forced to change his lodging, and was taken in by one Pudens, a senator, lately converted to the faith. Here he closely plied his main office and employment, to establish Christianity in that place. Here we are told he met with Philo the Jew,<sup>1</sup> lately come on his second embassy unto Rome, in the behalf of his countrymen at Alexandria, and to have contracted an intimate friendship and acquaintance with him. And now it was, says Baronius,<sup>2</sup> that Peter being mindful of the churches which he had founded in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Bithynia, and Asia the less, wrote his first epistle to them: which he probably infers hence, that St. Mark being yet with him at the time of the date of this epistle, it must be written at least some time this year; for that now it was that St. Mark was sent to preach and propagate the faith in Egypt. Next to the planting religion at Rome, he took care to propagate it in the western parts. And to that end, if we may believe one of those that

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. ii. c. 17, p. 53. Hieron. de Script. Eccl. in Phil. p. 270.

<sup>2</sup> Ad Ann. 45, num. 16.

pretend to be his successors,<sup>1</sup>) he sent abroad disciples into several provinces; that so 'their sound might go into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.'

3. It happened that after St. Peter had been several years at Rome, Claudius the emperor, taking the advantage of some seditions and tumults raised by the Jews, by a public edict banished them out of Rome;<sup>2</sup> in the number of whom, St. Peter (they say) departed thence, and returned back to Jerusalem, where he was present at that great apostolical synod, of which before. After this we are left under great uncertainties how he disposed of himself for many years. Confident we may be that he was not idle, but spent his time sometimes in preaching in the eastern parts, and sometimes in other parts of the world; as in Africa, Sicily, Italy, and other places.<sup>3</sup> And here it may not be amiss to insert a claim in behalf of our own country: Eusebius telling us (as Metaphrastes reports it<sup>4</sup>) that Peter was not only in these western parts, but particularly that he was a long time in Britain, where he converted many nations to the faith. But we had better be without the honour of St. Peter's company, than build the story upon so sandy a foundation; Metaphrastes's authority being of so little value in this case, that it is slighted by the more learned and moderate writers of the church of Rome. But wherever it was that St. Peter employed his time, towards the latter part of Nero's reign he returned to Rome, where he found the minds of the

<sup>1</sup> Innoc. Ep. i. ad Dec. Eug. Concil. tom. i. p. 751.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Oros. lib. vii. c. 6, fol. 297.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. Innoc. Epist. ubi supra.

<sup>4</sup> De Petr. et Paul. ad diem 29 Jun. num. 23. Vid. etiam num. 10, ibid.

people strangely bewitched and hardened against the embracing of the Christian religion, by the subtilties and magic arts of Simon Magus, whom (as we have before related) he had formerly baffled at Samaria. This Simon was born at Gitton,<sup>1</sup> a village of Samaria, bred up in the arts of sorcery and divination; and, by the help of the diabolical powers, performed many strange feats of wonder and activity; insomuch that people generally looked upon him as some great deity come down from heaven. But being discovered and confounded by Peter at Samaria, he left the East, and fled to Rome; where, by witchcraft and sorceries, he insinuated himself into the favour of the people; and at last became very acceptable to the emperors themselves, insomuch that no honour and veneration was too great for him. Justin Martyr<sup>2</sup> assures us, that he was honoured as a deity, that a statue was erected to him in the Insula Tiberina, between two bridges, with this inscription: "SIMONI DEO SANCTO;" "To Simon the holy god;" that the Samaritans generally, and very many of other nations, did own and worship him as the chief principal deity. I know the credit of this inscription is shrewdly shaken by some later antiquaries, who tell us, that the good father, being a Greek, might easily mistake in a Latin inscription, or be imposed upon by others; and the true inscription was SEMONI SANGO DEO FIDIO, &c., such an inscription being in the last age dug up in the Tiberine island, and there preserved to this day. It is not impossible but this might be the foundation of

<sup>1</sup> Just. Mart. Apol. ii. p. 69—91. Vid. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 349.

<sup>2</sup> Ubi supra, Apol. ii.

the story. But sure I am, that it is not only reported by the martyr, who was himself a Samaritan, and lived but in the next age, but by others almost of the same time; Irenæus,<sup>1</sup> Tertullian,<sup>2</sup> and by others<sup>3</sup> after them. It further deserves to be considered, that Justin Martyr was a person of great learning and gravity, inquisitive about matters of this nature, at this time at Rome, where he was capable fully to satisfy himself in the truth of things; that he presented this apology to the emperor and the senate of Rome, to whom he would be careful what he said; and who, as they knew whether it was true or no, so, if false, could not but ill resent to be so boldly imposed upon by so notorious a fable. But be it as it will, he was highly in favour both with the people and their emperors; especially Nero, who was the great patron of magicians,<sup>4</sup> and all who maintained secret ways of commerce with the infernal powers. With him St. Peter<sup>5</sup> thought fit in the first place to encounter and to undeceive the people, by discovering the impostures and delusions of that wretched man.

4. That he did so, is generally affirmed by the ancient fathers;<sup>6</sup> who tell us of some particular instances wherein he baffled and confounded him. But because the matter is more entirely drawn up by Hegesippus<sup>7</sup> the younger, an author contempo-

<sup>1</sup> Iren. Adv. Hæres. lib. i. c. 20, p. 115.

<sup>2</sup> Tertull. Apol. c. 13, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Euseb. lib. ii. c. 14, p. 51. Aug. de Hæres. in Simon. tom. vi. col. 13. Niceph. lib. ii. cap. 14, p. 154.

<sup>4</sup> Vid. Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. xxx. c. 2, p. 606.

<sup>5</sup> Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. c. 14, p. 51, 52.

<sup>6</sup> Damasc. in Vit. Petr. Conc. tom. i. Const. App. lib. vi. c. 8, 9, p. 944. Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. ii. p. 23. Epiph. Hæres. xxi. p. 3. 1. Sulp. Sever. lib. ii. p. 137, et alii.

<sup>7</sup> Heges. de Excid. Hieros. lib. iiii. c. 2, 293.



rary with St. Ambrose, if not (which is most probable) St. Ambrose himself, we shall from him represent the summary of the story. There was at this time at Rome an eminent young gentleman, and a kinsman of the emperor's, lately dead. The fame which Peter had for raising persons to life, persuaded his friends that he might be called. Others also prevailing that Simon the magician might be sent for. Simon glad of the occasion to magnify himself before the people, propounded to Peter, that if he raised the gentleman unto life, then Peter, who had so injuriously provoked the great power of God, (as he styled himself) should lose his life: but if Peter prevailed, he himself would submit to the same fate and sentence. Peter accepted the terms, and Simon began his charms and enchantments, whereat the dead gentleman seemed to move his hand. The people that stood by presently cried out that he was alive, and that he talked with Simon; and began to fall foul upon Peter, for daring to oppose himself against so great a power. The apostle entreated their patience, told them that all this was but a phantasm and appearance; that if Simon was but taken from the bed-side, all this pageantry would quickly vanish. Who being accordingly removed, the body remained without the least sign of motion. Peter, standing at a good distance from the bed, silently made his address to heaven, and then before them all commanded the young gentleman in the name of the Lord Jesus to arise; who immediately did so, spoke, walked, and eat, and was by Peter restored to his mother. The people who saw this, suddenly changed their opinions, and fell upon the magician with an intent to stone him. But Peter begged his life, and told

him, that it would be a sufficient punishment to him to live and see, that in despite of all his power and malice, the kingdom of Christ should increase and flourish. The magician was inwardly tormented with this defeat, and vexed to see the triumph of the apostles; and therefore mustering up all his powers, summoned the people, told them he was offended at the Galileans, whose protector and guardian he had been; and therefore set them a day, when he promised that they should see him fly up into heaven.<sup>1</sup> At the time appointed, he went up into the mount of the capitol, and throwing himself from the top of the rock, began his flight. A sight which the people entertained with great wonder and veneration, affirming that this must be the power of God, and not of man. Peter standing in the crowd, prayed to our Lord that the people might be undeceived; and that the vanity of the impostor might be discovered in such a way that he himself might be sensible of it. Immediately the wings which he had made himself began to fail him, and he fell to the ground, miserably bruised and wounded with the fall: whence being carried into a neighbouring village, he soon after died. This is the story; for the particular circumstances whereof the reader must rely upon the credit of my author, the thing in general being sufficiently acknowledged by most ancient writers. This contest of Peter's with Simon Magus is placed

<sup>1</sup> Sulpicius, an author who wrote at the beginning of the fifth century, states the tradition at full, as a matter of history; and says that Simon, in attempting to fly, supported by two demons, was cast down by the united prayers of Peter and Paul. The same tradition respecting his flying is also reported by other authors, particularly by Isidore, bishop of Seville, in the sixth century.—ED.

by Eusebius under the reign of Claudius ; but by the generality both of ancient and later authors, it is referred to the reign of Nero.<sup>1</sup>

5. Such was the end of this miserable and unhappy man ; which no sooner came to the ears of the emperor, to whom by wicked artifices he had endeared himself, but it became an occasion of hastening Peter's ruin. The emperor probably had been before displeased with Peter, not only upon the account of the general disagreement, and inconformity of his religion, but because he had so strictly pressed temperance and chastity, and reclaimed so many women in Rome from a dissolute and vicious life ; thereby crossing that wanton and lascivious temper to which that prince was so immoderate a slave and vassal.<sup>2</sup> And being now by this means robbed of his dear favourite and companion, he resolved upon revenge ; and commanded Peter (as also St. Paul, who was at this time at Rome) to be apprehended and cast into the Marmertine prison :<sup>3</sup> where they spent their time in the exercises of religion, and especially in preaching to the prisoners, and those who resorted to them. And here we may suppose it was (if not a little before) that Peter wrote his second epistle to the dispersed Jews, wherein he endeavours to con-

<sup>1</sup> The character of Simon, as recorded in the Acts, and the known inclination of the people in this age for magical arts, would be sufficient to give a high degree of probability to this tradition. Many instances of daring confidence in occult science are on record which admit of no doubt, and the apparent infatuation, therefore, of Simon and his deluded admirers may be matter of surprise rather than of incredulity. Satan, moreover, no doubt employed him as one of his agents in the struggle in which he was engaged.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Ambr. Orat. in Auxent. Ep. lib. v. p. 125, tom. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. Martyr. Rom. ad diem 14 Mart. p. 165.

firm them in the belief and practice of Christianity, and to fortify them against those poisonous and pernicious principles and practices, which even then began to break in upon the Christian church.

6. Nero returning from Achaia, and entering Rome with a great deal of pomp and triumph, resolved now the apostle should fall as a victim and sacrifice to his cruelty and revenge. While the fatal stroke was daily expected, the Christians in Rome did, by daily prayers and importunities, solicit St. Peter to make an escape, and to reserve himself to the uses and services of the church.<sup>1</sup> This at first he rejected, as what would ill reflect upon his courage and constancy, and argue him to be afraid of those sufferings for Christ to which he himself had so often persuaded others; but the prayers and tears of the people overcame him, and made him yield. Accordingly the next night, having prayed with, and taken his farewell of the brethren, he got over the prison wall; and coming to the city gate, he is there said to have met with our Lord, who was just entering into the city. Peter asked him, "Lord, whither art thou going?" From whom he presently received this answer: "I am come to Rome, to be crucified a second time." By which answer Peter apprehended himself to be reproved, and that our Lord meant it of his death, that he was to be crucified in his servant. Whereupon he went back to the prison, and delivered himself into the hands of his keepers, showing himself most ready and cheerful to acquiesce in the will of God. And we are told, that in the stone whereon our Lord stood while he talked with Peter, he left

<sup>1</sup> Vid. Ambr. ut supra, et Heges. ib. 279.

the impression of his feet; which stone has been ever since preserved as a very sacred relic, and after several translations was at length fixed in the church of St. Sebastian the martyr, where it is kept and visited with great expressions of reverence and devotion at this day.<sup>1</sup> Before his suffering he was, no question, scourged; according to the manner of the Romans, who were wont first to whip those malefactors who were adjudged to the most severe and capital punishments. Having saluted his brethren, and especially having taken his last farewell of St. Paul, he was brought out of the prison, and led to the top of the Vatican Mount, near to Tiber, the place designed for his execution. The death he was adjudged to was crucifixion; as of all others accounted the most shameful, so the most severe and terrible. But he entreated the favour of the officers, that he might not be crucified in the ordinary way,<sup>2</sup> but might suffer with his head downwards, and his feet up to heaven; affirming that he was unworthy to suffer in the same posture wherein his Lord had suffered before him.

<sup>1</sup> Rom. Subterranean. lib. iii. c. 21. n. 15. tom. i. p. 292.

<sup>2</sup> Orig. lib. iii. in Genes. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. 1. p. 71. Hieron. de Script. Eccl. in Petr. p. 262. Heges. p. 279.

Prima Petrum rapuit sententia legibus Neronis,  
 Pendere jussum præminente ligno.  
 Ille tamen veritus celsæ decus æmulando mortis  
 Ambire tanti gloriam Magistri:  
 Exigit ut pedibus mersum caput imprimant supinis,  
 Quo spectet inum stipitem cerebro.  
 Figitur ergo manus subter, sola versus in cacumen  
 Hoc mente major, quo minor figura.  
 Noverat ex humili cælum citius solere adiri,  
 Dejecit ora, spiritum daturus.  
 Prudent. Peristeph. Hymn. xi. in pass. Pet. et Paul.

Happy man (as Chrysostom glosses<sup>1</sup>) to be set in the readiest posture of travelling from earth to heaven. His body being taken from the cross, is said to have been embalmed by Marcellinus the presbyter, after the Jewish manner, and was then buried in the Vatican, near the triumphal way. Over his grave a small church<sup>2</sup> was soon after erected; which being destroyed by Heliogabalus, his body was removed to the cemetery in the Appian-way, two miles from Rome; where it remained till the time of pope Cornelius, who reconveyed it to the Vatican, where it rested somewhat obscurely till the reign of Constantine; who, out of the mighty reverence which he had for the Christian religion, caused many churches to be built at Rome, but especially rebuilt and enlarged the Vatican to the honour of St. Peter. In the doing whereof himself is said to have been the first that began to dig the foundation, and to have carried thence twelve baskets of rubbish with his own hands; in honour, as it should seem, of the twelve apostles. He infinitely enriched the church with gifts and ornaments, which in every age increased in splendour and riches, till it is become one of the wonders of the world at this day; of whose glories, stateliness, and beauty, and those many venerable monuments of antiquity that are in it, they who desire to know more, may be plentifully satisfied by Onuphrius.<sup>3</sup> Only one amongst the rest must not be forgotten; there being kept that very wooden chair wherein St. Peter sat when he was at Rome, by the only touching whereof many miracles are said to

<sup>1</sup> Serm. in Petr. et Paul. p. 267, tom. vii.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Onuphr. de VII. Urb. Basil. c. 4, p. 45, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Loc. supra laudat.

be performed. But surely Baronius's wisdom and gravity were from home, when speaking of this chair; and fearing that heretics would imagine that it might be rotten in so long a time, he tells us, that it is no wonder that this chair should be preserved so long, when Eusebius affirms, that the wooden chair of St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, was extant in the time of Constantine.<sup>1</sup> But the cardinal, it seems, forgot to consider, that there is some difference between three and sixteen hundred years. But of this enough. St. Peter was crucified, according to the common computation, in the year of Christ 69,<sup>2</sup> and the thirteenth (or, as Eusebius, the fourteenth) of Nero; how truly may be inquired afterwards.

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## SECTION X.

*The character of his Person and Temper; and an account of his Writings.*

HAVING run through the current history of St. Peter's life, it may not be amiss in the next place to survey a little his person and temper. His body (if we may believe the description given of him by Nicephorus<sup>3</sup>) was somewhat slender, of a middle size, but rather inclining to tallness; his complexion very pale, and almost white; the hair of

<sup>1</sup> Ad. An. 45, n. 11.

Or the year 65, which is the date argued for by many eminent scholars.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. Eccles. lib. ii. c. 37. p. 195.

his head and beard curled and thick, but withal short: though St. Jerome tells, out of Clemens's Periods,<sup>1</sup> that he was bald; which probably might be in his declining age. His eyes black, but specked with red; which Baronius<sup>2</sup> will have to proceed from his frequent weeping: his eyebrows thin, or none at all; his nose long, but rather broad and flat than sharp. Such was the case and outside. Let us next look inwards, and view the jewel that was within. Take him as a man, and there seems to have been a natural eagerness predominant in his temper, which as a whetstone sharpened his soul for all bold and generous undertakings. It was this, in a great measure, that made him so forward to speak, and to return answers, sometimes before he had well considered them. It was this made him expose his person to the most imminent dangers,<sup>3</sup> promise those great things in behalf of his master, and resolutely draw his sword in his quarrel against a whole band of soldiers, and wound the high-priest's servant: and possibly he had attempted greater matters, had not our Lord restrained and taken him off by that seasonable check that he gave him.

2. This temper he owed in a great measure to the genius and nature of his country, of which Josephus gives this true character: That it naturally bred in men a certain fierceness and animosity, whereby they were fearlessly carried out upon any action, and in all things showed a great

<sup>1</sup> Com. in Gal. 2. p. 164. tom. ix. ex lib. dicto Πράξεις, seu Περίοδοι Πέτρος.

<sup>2</sup> Ad An. 69. n. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Καὶ τοίγῃ ὁ Πέτρος θερμότερον πανταχὲ ἐκινεῖται ἐκ φθέγγεται.—Chrysost. Hom. 32. in Joan. p. 170.



strength and courage both of mind and body. The Galileans (says he) being fighters from their childhood; the men being as seldom overtaken with cowardice as their country with want of men.<sup>1</sup> And yet, notwithstanding this, his fervour and fierceness had its intervals; there being some times when the paroxysms of his heat and courage did intermit, and the man was surprised and betrayed by his own fears. Witness his passionate crying out when he was upon the sea, in danger of his life, and his fearful deserting his master in the garden; but especially his carriage in the high-priest's hall, when the confident charge of a sorry maid made him sink so far beneath himself; and, notwithstanding his great and resolute promises, so shamefully deny his master, and that with curses and imprecations. But he was in danger, and passion prevailed over his understanding, and fear betrayed the succours which reason offered; and being intent upon nothing but the present safety of his life, he heeded not what he did, when he disowned his master to save himself. So dangerous is it to be left to ourselves, and to have our natural passions let loose upon us.

3. Consider him as a disciple and a Christian, and we shall find him exemplary in the great instances of religion, singular in his humility and lowliness of mind. With what a passionate earnestness, upon the conviction of a miracle, did he beg of our Saviour to depart from him; account-

<sup>1</sup> Τηλικαῦται δὲ ἔσαι τὸ μέγεθος, ἢ τοσέτοις ἔθνεσιν ἀλλοφύλοις κεκυκλωμένοι, πρὸς πᾶσαν αἰὲ πόλεμος πείραν ἀντίσχον· μάχιμοί τε γὰρ ἐκ νηπίων, ἢ πολλοὶ πάντοτε Γαλιλαῖοι· ἢ ὅτε δειλία πότε τῶς ἀνδρας, ὅτε λειπανδρεία τὴν χῶραν κατέσχευ.—De Bello Jud. lib. iii. c. 4. p. 833.

ing himself not worthy that the Son of God should come near so vile a sinner? When our Lord, by that wonderful condescension, stooped to wash his apostles' feet, he could by no means be persuaded to admit it; not thinking it fit that so great a person should submit himself to so servile an office towards so mean a person as himself; nor could he be induced to accept it, till our Lord was in a manner forced to threaten him into obedience. When Cornelius, heightened in his apprehensions of him by an immediate command from God concerning him, would have entertained him with expressions of more than ordinary honour and veneration, so far was he from complying with it, that he plainly told him, he was no other than such a man as himself. With how much candour and modesty does he treat the inferior rulers and ministers of the church! He, upon whom antiquity heaps so many honourable titles, stiling himself no other than their fellow-presbyter. Admirable his love to, and zeal for his master, which he thought he could never express at too high a rate: for his sake venturing on the greatest dangers, and exposing himself to the most imminent hazards of life. It was in his quarrel that he drew his sword against a band of soldiers, and an armed multitude; and it was love to his master that drew him into that imprudent advice, that he should seek to save himself, and avoid those sufferings that were coming upon him; that made him promise and engage so deep to suffer and die with him. Great was his forwardness in owning Christ to be the Messiah and Son of God; which drew from our Lord that honourable encomium, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah.' But greater his courage and

constancy in confessing Christ before his most inveterate enemies, especially after he had recovered himself of his fall. With how much plainness did he tell the Jews, at every turn, to their very faces, that they were the murderers and crucifiers of the Lord of glory ! Nay, with what an undaunted courage, with what an heroic greatness of mind did he tell that very Sanhedrim that had sentenced and condemned him, that they were guilty of his murder ; and that they could never be saved any other way than by this very Jesus whom they had crucified and put to death.

4. Lastly, let us reflect upon him as an apostle, as a pastor and guide of souls. And so we find him faithful and diligent in his office ; with an infinite zeal endeavouring to instruct the ignorant, reduce the erroneous, to strengthen the weak, and confirm the strong, to reclaim the vicious, and ‘turn souls to righteousness.’ We find him taking all opportunities of preaching to the people, converting many thousands at once. How many voyages and travels did he undergo ! With how unconquerable a patience did he endure all conflicts and trials, and surmount all difficulties and oppositions, that he might plant and propagate the Christian faith ; not thinking much to lay down his own life to promote and further it ! Nor did he only do his duty himself, but as one of the prime superintendents of the church, and as one that was sensible of the value and worth of souls, he was careful to put others in mind of theirs ; earnestly pressing and persuading the pastors and governors of it, ‘to feed the flock of God ;’<sup>1</sup> to take

<sup>1</sup> 1 Pet. v. 3, 4.

upon them the rule and inspection of it,' 'freely and willingly;' not out of a sinister end, merely, of gaining advantages to themselves, but out of a sincere design of doing good to souls; that they would treat them mildly and gently, and be themselves examples of piety and religion to them, as the best way to make their ministry successful and effectual. And because he could not be always present to teach and warn men, he ceased not by letters 'to stir up their minds' to the remembrance and practice of what they had been taught. A course, he tells them, which he was resolved to hold as long as he lived; as 'thinking it meet while he was in this tabernacle to stir them up, by putting them in mind of these things;' <sup>1</sup> that so they might be able after his decease to have them always in remembrance. And this may lead us to the consideration of those writings which he left behind him for the benefit of the church.

5. Now the writings that entitle themselves to this apostle, were either genuine or supposititious. The genuine writings are his two epistles, which make up part of the sacred canon. For the first of them, no certain account can be had when it was written: though Baronius and most writers commonly assign it to the year of Christ 44.<sup>2</sup> But this cannot be, Peter not being at Rome (from whence it is supposed to have been written) at that time, as we shall see anon. He wrote it to the Jewish converts dispersed through Pontus, Galatia,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i. 12, 13, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Most later critics have assigned the year 64 as the more probable date of this epistle. Baronius seems to have been led into the error of giving it so early a date by his desire to strengthen his general argument respecting the apostle's residence at Rome.—ED.

and the countries thereabouts, chiefly upon the occasion of that persecution which had been raised at Jerusalem. And, accordingly, the main design of it is, to confirm and comfort them under their present sufferings and persecutions, and to direct and instruct them how to carry themselves in the several states and relations, both of the civil and the Christian life. For the place whence it was written, it is expressly dated from Babylon: but what or where this Babylon is, is not so easy to determine. Some think it was Babylon in Egypt, and probably Alexandria; and that there Peter preached the gospel. Others will have it to have been Babylon the ancient metropolis of Assyria, and where great numbers of Jews dwelt ever since the times of their captivities. But we need not send Peter on so long an errand, if we embrace the notion of a learned man,<sup>1</sup> who by Babylon will figuratively understand Jerusalem; no longer now the holy city, but a kind of spiritual Babylon, in which the church of God did at this time groan under great servitude and captivity. And this notion of the word he endeavours to make good, by calling in to his assistance two of the ancient fathers,<sup>2</sup> who so understand that of the prophet, 'We have healed Babylon, but she was not healed.' Where the prophet, say they, by Babylon means Jerusalem, as differing nothing from the wickedness of the nations, nor conforming itself to the law of God. But generally the writers of the Romish church, and the more moderate of the reformed party, acquiescing herein in the judgment of antiquity, by Babylon understand Rome. And so it

<sup>1</sup> L. Capell. Append. ad Hist. App. p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> Cyril. Alex. et Procop. Gaz. in Esa. 53.

is plain St. John calls it in his 'Revelation,'<sup>1</sup> either from its conformity in power and greatness to that ancient city, or from that great idolatry which at this time reigned in Rome. And so we may suppose St. Peter to have written it from Rome, not long after his coming thither, though the precise time be not exactly known.

6. As for the second epistle, it was not accounted of old of equal value and authority with the first; and, therefore, for some ages, not taken into the sacred canon, as is expressly affirmed by Eusebius,<sup>2</sup> and many of the ancients before him. The ancient Syriac church did not receive it; and accordingly it is not to be found in their ancient copies of the New Testament.<sup>3</sup> Yea, those of that church at this day do not own it as canonical, but only read it privately, as we do the apocryphal books. The greatest exception that I can find against it, is the difference of its style from the other epistle;<sup>4</sup> whence it was presumed, that they were not both written by the same hand. But St. Jerome, who tells us the objection, does elsewhere himself return the answer, that the difference in the style and manner of writing might very well arise from hence, that St. Peter, according to his different circumstances, and the necessity of affairs, was forced to use several emanuenses and interpreters;<sup>5</sup> sometimes St. Mark, and after his departure some other person, which might justly occa-

<sup>1</sup> Chap. xviii. 2, 10, 21.

<sup>2</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 3, p. 72. Orig. apud Niceph. lib. v. c. 16, p. 365.

<sup>3</sup> Vid. Edv. Pocock. præfat. ad Epist. Syr. à se edit.

<sup>4</sup> Hier. de script. Eccl. in Petr.

<sup>5</sup> Quæst. 11, ad Hedib. tom iii. p. 151.

sion a difference in the style and character of these epistles. Not to say, that the same person may vastly alter and vary his style, according to the times when, or the persons to whom, or the subjects about which he writes, or the temper and disposition he is in at the time of writing, or the care that is used in doing it. Who sees not the vast difference of Jeremiah's writing in his Prophecy, and in his book of Lamentations? between St. John's, in his Gospel, his Epistles, and Apocalypse? How oft does St. Paul alter his style in several of his Epistles; in some more lofty and elegant; in others more rough and harsh? Besides hundreds of instances that might be given, both in ecclesiastical and foreign writers, too obvious to need insisting on in this place. The learned Grotius<sup>1</sup> will have this epistle to have been written by Symeon, St. James's immediate successor in the bishopric of Jerusalem, and that the word (Peter) was inserted into the title by another hand. But, as a judicious person of our own observes,<sup>2</sup> these were but his posthume annotations, published by others, and no doubt never intended as the deliberate result of that great man's judgment; especially since he himself tacitly acknowledges, that all copies extant at this day read the title and inscription as it is in our books. And, indeed, there is a concurrence of circumstances to prove St. Peter to be the author of it. It bears his name in the front and title, yea, somewhat more expressly than the former, which has only one; this both his names. There is a passage in it which cannot well relate to any but

<sup>1</sup> Annot. in 2 Pet. c. i.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Hammond in Argum. Epist.

him: when he tells us that he was present with Christ in the holy mount; when he 'received from God the Father honour and glory:' where he 'heard the voice which came from heaven, from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'<sup>1</sup> This evidently refers to Christ's transfiguration, where none were present but Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, neither of which was ever thought to be the author of this epistle. Besides that there is an admirable consent and agreement in many passages between these two epistles, as it were easy to show in particular instances. Add to this, that St. Jude, speaking of the 'scoffers' who should come 'in the last time, walking after their own ungodly lusts,'<sup>2</sup> cites this as that which had been 'before spoken by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;' wherein he plainly quotes the words of this second epistle of Peter, affirming, that 'there should come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts.'<sup>3</sup> And that this does agree to Peter, will further appear by this, that he tells us of these scoffers that should come in the last days; that is, before the destruction of Jerusalem; (as that phrase is often used in the New Testament;) that they should say, 'Where is the promise of his coming?' Which clearly respects their making light of those threatenings of our Lord, whereby he had foretold that he would shortly come in judgment for the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. This he now puts them in mind of, as what probably he had before told them of *vivâ voce*, when he was amongst

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. i. 16, 17, 18.<sup>2</sup> Jud. 17, 18.<sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 2, 3.



them: for so we find he did elsewhere. Lactantius assuring us, "That amongst many strange and wonderful things which Peter and Paul preached at Rome, and left upon record, this was one: that within a short time God would send a prince who should destroy the Jews, and lay their cities level with the ground, straitly besiege them, destroy them with famine, so that they should feed upon one another: that their wives and daughters should be ravished, and their children's brains dashed out before their faces: that all things should be laid waste by fire and sword, and themselves perpetually banished from their own country; and this for their insolent and merciless usage of the innocent and dear Son of God." All which, as he observes, came to pass soon after their death, when Vespasian came upon the Jews, and extinguished both their name and nation. And what Peter here foretold at Rome, we need not question but he had done before to those Jews to whom he wrote this epistle. Wherein he especially antidotes them against those corrupt and poisonous principles, wherewith many, and especially the followers of Simon Magus, began to infect the church of Christ. And this but a little time before his death, as appears from that passage in it, where he tells them, 'That he knew he must shortly put off his earthly tabernacle.'

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iv. cap. 21, p. 422.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. i. 14.

<sup>3</sup> The caution with which St. Peter's Second Epistle was received into the sacred canon, affords a most valuable proof of the care employed by the church in the examination of writings purporting to be inspired. It was not probable that the genuineness and authenticity of the apostle's epistles could be every where known at the same period.—ED.

7. Besides these divine epistles, there were other supposititious writings which, in the first ages, were fathered upon St. Peter. Such was the book called his Acts, mentioned by Origen,<sup>1</sup> Eusebius,<sup>2</sup> and others; but rejected by them. Such was his Gospel, which probably at first was nothing else but the gospel written by St. Mark, dictated to him (as is generally thought) by St. Peter; and therefore, as St. Jerome tells us,<sup>3</sup> said to be his. Though in the next age there appeared a book under that title, mentioned by Serapion,<sup>4</sup> bishop of Antioch, and by him at first suffered to be read in the church; but afterwards, upon a more careful perusal of it, he rejected it as apocryphal, as it was by others after him. Another was the book styled his Preaching, mentioned and quoted by Clemens Alexandrinus,<sup>5</sup> and by Origen,<sup>6</sup> but not acknowledged by them to be genuine; nay, expressly said to have been forged by heretics, by an ancient author contemporary with St. Cyprian.<sup>7</sup> The next was his Apocalypse, or Revelation; rejected, as Sozomen tells us,<sup>8</sup> by the ancients as spurious, but yet read in some churches in Palestine in his time. The last was the book called his Judgment, which probably was the same with that called Hermes, or Pastor,<sup>9</sup> a book of good use and esteem in the first

<sup>1</sup> Orig. tom. xx. in Joan.

<sup>2</sup> Euseb. lib. iii. c. 3, p. 72.

<sup>3</sup> In Petro, ut supra.

<sup>4</sup> Apud Euseb. lib. vi. c. 12, p. 213.

<sup>5</sup> Strom. lib. vi. p. 635, et in Excerpt. Græc. ex Hypotyp. p. 809.

<sup>6</sup> Orig. tom. xiii. in Joan.

<sup>7</sup> De Hæret. non Rebapt. apud Cypr. p. 142.

<sup>8</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. vii. c. 19, p. 735.

<sup>9</sup> Vid. Ruffin. Exposit. Symbol. inter Oper. Hier. tom. iv. p. 133.

times of Christianity, and which, as Eusebius tells us,<sup>1</sup> was not only frequently cited by the ancients, but also publicly read in churches.

8. We shall conclude this section by considering Peter with respect to his several relations: that he was married is unquestionable, the sacred history mentioning his wife's mother: his wife (might we believe Metaphrastes<sup>2</sup>) being the daughter of Aristobulus, brother to Barnabas the apostle. And though St. Jerome<sup>3</sup> would persuade us that he left her behind him, together with his nets, when he forsook all to follow Christ; yet we know that father too well to be over-confident upon his word in a case of marriage or single life, wherein he is not over-scrupulous sometimes to strain a point, to make his opinion more fair and plausible. The best is, we have an infallible authority which plainly intimates the contrary, the testimony of St. Paul, who tells us of Cephas, that 'he led about a wife, a sister,' along with him; who for the most part mutually cohabited and lived together, for aught that can be proved to the contrary. Clemens Alexandrinus<sup>4</sup> gives us this account, though he tells us not the time or place; that Peter, seeing his wife going towards martyrdom, exceedingly rejoiced that she was called to so great an honour, and that she was now returning home; encouraging and earnestly exhorting her, and calling her by her name, bade her be mindful of our Lord. Such, says he, was the wedlock of that blessed couple, and the perfect

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 3, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Comment. de S. Petr. apud Sur. ad diem 29 Jun. n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Ep. ad Julian. tom i. p. 207. 1. Cor. ix. 5. Vid. Clem. Recognit. lib. vii. fol. 76, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Strom. lib. vi. p. 736.

disposition and agreement in those things that were dearest to them. By her he is said to have had a daughter, <sup>1</sup> called Petronilla, (Metaphrastes <sup>2</sup> adds a son,) how truly I know not. This only is certain, that Clemens <sup>3</sup> of Alexandria, reckons Peter for one of the apostles that was married and had children. And surely he who was so good a man, and so good an apostle, was as good in the relation both of an husband and a father.

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## SECTION XI.

### *An Inquiry into St. Peter's going to Rome.*

It is not my purpose to swim against the stream and current of antiquity, in denying St. Peter to have been at Rome; an assertion easilier perplexed and entangled than confuted and disproved: we may grant the main, without doing any great service to that church; there being evidence enough to every impartial and considering man, to spoil that smooth and plausible scheme of times, which Baronius and the writers of that church have drawn with so much care and diligence. And in order to this we shall first inquire, whether that account which Bellarmine and Baronius give us of Peter's being at Rome, be tolerably reconcileable with the history of the apostles' acts, recorded by St. Luke;

<sup>1</sup> Baron. ad Ann. 60. n. 32.

<sup>2</sup> Ubi supra.

Metaphrastes was one of the principal Greek writers of the age in which he lived, but his Lives of the Saints are too filled with fable to possess any authority with ecclesiastical historians.

—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Strom. lib. iii. p. 448.

which will be best done by briefly presenting St. Peter's acts in their just series and order of time, and then see what countenance and foundation their account can receive from hence.<sup>1</sup>

2. After our Lord's ascension, we find Peter, for the first year at least, staying with the rest of the apostles at Jerusalem. In the next year he was sent, together with St. John, by the command of the apostles, to Samaria, to preach the gospel to that city, and the parts about it. About three years after, St. Paul meets him at Jerusalem, with whom he staid some time. In the two following years he visited the late planted churches, preached at Lydda and Joppa, where having 'tarried many days,' he thence removed to Cæsarea, where he preached to, and baptized Cornelius and his family. Whence, after some time, he returned to Jerusalem, where he probably staid, till cast into prison by Herod, and delivered by the angel. After which we hear no more of him, till three or four years after we find him in the council at Jerusalem. After which he had the contest with St. Paul at Antioch. And thenceforward the sacred story is altogether silent in this matter. So that in all this

<sup>1</sup> The united learning, candour, and honesty of our author are here conspicuously displayed: few passages in history are more strongly confirmed than that which relates the apostle's residence at Rome. In the summary of the opposite arguments, given by Basnage, Liv. vii. c. 3, (*Histoire de l'Eglise*), this must be apparent to every candid inquirer; and in all subjects of this kind, it should always be observed as a principle, that no circumstance in history can by any possibility be rendered doubtful by the disputed inferences drawn therefrom. However erroneous the use made of facts, never let the facts on that account be disallowed. The Roman Catholic writers, however, have endangered the apparent truth of history, by forcing what is supported on sufficient evidence into assertions to which the historical evidence does not extend.—ED.

time we find not the least footstep of any intimation that he went to Rome. This Baronius<sup>1</sup> well foresaw; and therefore once and again inserts this caution, that St. Luke did not design to record all the apostle's acts, and that he has omitted many things which were done by Peter: which surely no man ever intended to deny. But then, that he should omit a matter of such vast moment and importance to the whole Christian world; that not one syllable should be said of a church planted by Peter at Rome; a church that was to be paramount, the seat of all spiritual power and infallibility, and to which all other churches were to veil and do homage; nay, that he should not so much as mention that ever he was there, and yet all this said to be done within the time he designed to write of, is by no means reasonable to suppose. Especially considering that St. Luke records many of his journeys and travels, and his preaching at several places, of far less consequence and concernment. Nor let this be thought the worse of, because a negative argument, since it carries so much rational evidence along with it, that any man who is not plainly biassed by interest will be satisfied with it.

3. But let us proceed a little further to inquire, whether we can meet any probable footsteps afterwards. About the year 53, towards the end of Claudius's reign, St. Paul is thought to have writ his epistle to the church of Rome, wherein he spends the greatest part of one chapter in saluting particular persons that were there; amongst whom it might reasonably have been expected, that St. Peter should have had the first place. And sup-

<sup>1</sup> Ad. Ann. 39, num. 12, ad Ann. 34, num. 285.

posing with Baronius,<sup>1</sup> that Peter at this time might be absent from the city, preaching the gospel in some parts of the west, yet we are not sure that St. Paul knew of this; and if he did, it is strange that in so large an epistle, wherein he had occasion enough, there should be neither direct nor indirect mention of him, or of any church there founded by him. Nay, St. Paul himself intimates, what an earnest desire he had to come thither, that he might 'impart unto them some spiritual gifts, to the end they might be established in the faith;'<sup>2</sup> for which there could have been no such apparent cause, had Peter been there so lately and so long before him. Well, St. Paul himself, not many years after, is sent to Rome, ann. Chr. 56, or as Eusebius, 57; (though Baronius makes it two years after;) about the second year of Nero: when he comes thither, does he go to sojourn with Peter, as it is likely he would, had he been there? No, but dwelt by himself in his own hired house. No sooner was he come, but he called the chief of the Jews together, acquainted them with the cause and end of his coming, explains the doctrine of Christianity; which when they rejected, he tells them, that 'henceforth the salvation of God was sent unto the Gentiles,' who would hear it, to whom he would now address himself.<sup>3</sup> Which seems to intimate, that however some few of the Gentiles might have been brought over, yet that no such harvest had been made before his coming, as might reasonably have been expected from St. Peter's having been so many years amongst them. Within

<sup>1</sup> Ad Ann. 58, n. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. i. 10, 11, 12.

<sup>3</sup> Acts, xxviii. 17.

the two first years after St. Paul's coming to Rome, he wrote epistles to several churches, to the Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians, and one to Philemon; in none whereof is there the least mention of St. Peter, or from whence the least probability can be derived that he had been there. In that to the Colossians, he tells them, that of the Jews at Rome he had had 'no other fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God, which had been a comfort unto him, save only Aristarchus, Marcus, and Jesus, who was called Justus;' <sup>1</sup> which evidently excludes St. Peter. And in that to Timothy, which Barmenius confesses to have been written a little before his martyrdom, (though probably it was written at the same time with the rest above mentioned,) he tells him, that 'at his first answer at Rome, no man stood with him, but that all men forsook him;' <sup>2</sup> which we can hardly believe St. Peter would have done, had he then been there. He further tells him, that 'only Luke was with him;' that Crescens was gone to this place, Titus to that, and Tychicus left at another. Strange, that if Peter was at this time gone from Rome, St. Paul should take no notice of it as well as the rest! Was he so inconsiderable a person as not to be worth the remembering? or his errand of so small importance as not to deserve a place in St. Paul's account, as well as that of Crescens to Galatia, or of Titus to Dalmatia? Surely the true reason was, that St. Peter as yet had not been at Rome, and so there could be no foundation for it.

4. It were no hard matter further to demonstrate the inconsistency of that account which Bellarmine

<sup>1</sup> Acts, iv. 10 11.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 16.



and Baronius give us, of Peter's being at Rome from the time of the apostolical synod at Jerusalem. For if St. Paul went up to that council fourteen years after his own conversion, as he plainly intimates,<sup>1</sup> and that he himself was converted in the year 35, somewhat less than two years after the death of Christ, then it plainly appears that this council was holden in the year 48, in the sixth year of Claudius, if not somewhat sooner; for St. Paul's *διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν* does not necessarily imply that fourteen years were completely past; *διὰ* signifying *circa*, as well as *post*; but that it was near about that time. This being granted, (and if it be not, it is easy to make it good) then three things amongst others will follow from it. First, that whereas, according to Bellarmine<sup>2</sup> and Baronius,<sup>3</sup> St. Peter after his first coming to Rome, (which they place in the year 44, and the second of Claudius,) was seven years before he returned thence to the council at Jerusalem; they are strangely out in their story, there being but three, or at most four years between his going thither and the celebration of that council. Secondly; that when they tell us, that St. Peter's leaving Rome to come to the council, was upon the occasion of the decree of Claudius, banishing all Jews out of the city,<sup>4</sup> this can no ways be; for Orosius does not only affirm<sup>5</sup> but prove it from Josephus, that Claudius's decree was published in the ninth year of his reign, or anno Chr. 51; three years at least after the cele-

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Bellarmin. de Rom. Pontif. lib. ii. c. 6, col. 615.

<sup>3</sup> Baron ad Ann. 39. num. 15.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. et Baron. ad Ann. 51. num. 1. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Lib. vii. c. 6, fol. 297, p. 2.

bration of the council. Thirdly ; that when Baronius tells us,<sup>1</sup> that the reason why Peter went to Rome after the breaking up of the synod, was because Claudius was now dead, he not daring to go before for fear of the decree ; this can be no reason at all, the council being ended at least three years before that decree took place ; so that he might safely have gone thither without the least danger from it. It might further be showed (if it were necessary) that the account which even they themselves give us is not very consistent with itself. So fatally does a bad cause draw men, whether they will or no, into errors and mistakes.

5. The truth is, the learned men of that church are not well agreed among themselves, to give in their verdict in this case. And indeed how should they, when the thing itself affords no solid foundation for it ? Onuphrius, a man of great learning and industry in all matters of antiquity, and who (as the writer of Baronius's life informs us<sup>2</sup>) designed before Baronius to write the history of the church, goes a way by himself, in assigning the time of St. Peter's founding his see both at Antioch and Rome.<sup>3</sup> For finding, by the account of the sacred story, that Peter did not leave Judæa for the first ten years after our Lord's ascension, and consequently could not in that time erect his see at Antioch, he affirms that he went first to Rome, whence returning to the council at Jerusalem, he thence went to Antioch, where he remained seven years, till the death of Claudius ; and having spent almost the whole reign of Nero in several parts of

<sup>1</sup> Ad Ann. 58, n. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Hier. Barnab. de Vit. Baron. lib. i. c. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Onuphr. Annot. ad Plat. in Vit. Petr. p. 9, et in Fast.

Europe, returned in the last of Nero's reign to Rome, and there died. An opinion for which he is sufficiently chastised by Baronius<sup>1</sup> and others of that party. And here I cannot but remark the ingenuity (for the learning sufficiently commends itself) of Monsieur Valois,<sup>2</sup> who freely confesses the mistake of Baronius, Petavius, &c., in making Peter go to Rome in the year 44, the second year of Claudius, whereas it is plain, says he, from the history of the Acts, that Peter went not out of Judæa and Syria, till the death of Herod, the fourth of Claudius, two whole years after. Consonant to which, as he observes, is what Apollonius, a writer of the second century, reports from a tradition current in his time, that the apostles did not depart asunder till the twelfth year after Christ's ascension, our Lord himself having so commanded them. In confirmation whereof, let me add a passage that I meet with in Clemens of Alexandria,<sup>3</sup> where from St. Peter he records this speech of our Saviour to his apostles, spoken, probably either a little before his death or after his resurrection: *Ἐὰν μὲν ᾖ τις θελήσῃ τῷ Ἰσραὴλ μετανοῆσαι, διὰ τῷ ὀνόματός μου πιστεύειν ἐπὶ τὸν Θεόν, ἀφηθέσονται αὐτῷ αἱ ἁμαρτίαι, μετὰ δώδεκα ἔτη. Ἐξέλθετε εἰς τὸν κόσμον, μὴ τις εἴπῃ, ὃκ ἠκούσαμεν.* "If any Israelite shall repent, and believe in God through my name, his sins shall be forgiven him after twelve years. Go ye into the world, lest any should say, We have not heard." This passage, as ordinarily pointed in all editions that I have seen, is scarce capable of any tolerable sense; for what is the meaning of a penitent Israelite's being pardoned "after twelve years?"

<sup>1</sup> Ad Ann. 39, n. 12.<sup>2</sup> Annot. ad Euseb. lib. ii. c. 16.<sup>3</sup> Stromat. lib. vi. p. 636.

It is therefore probable, yea, certain with me, that the stop ought to be after ἀμαρτίαι, and μετὰ δώδεκα ἔτη joined to the following clause, and then the sense will run clear and smooth: "If any Jew shall repent and believe the gospel, he shall be pardoned; but after twelve years, go ye into all the world; that none may pretend that they have not heard the sound of the gospel." The apostles were first to preach the gospel to the Jews for some considerable time, twelve years after Christ's ascension, in and about Judæa, and then to betake themselves to the provinces of the Gentile world, to make known to them the glad tidings of salvation; exactly answerable to the tradition mentioned by Apollonius. Besides, the *Chronicon Alexandrinum* tells us, that Peter came not to Rome till the seventh year of Claudius, anno Christi, 49. So little certainty can there be of any matter wherein there is no truth. Nay, the same excellent man, before mentioned,<sup>1</sup> does not stick elsewhere to profess, he wonders at Baronius, that he should make Peter come from Rome, banished thence by Claudius's edict, to the synod at Jerusalem the same year, viz. the ninth of Claudius; a thing absolutely inconsistent with that story of the apostle's acts recorded by St. Luke, wherein there is the space of no less than three years, from the time of that synod to the decree of Claudius. It being evident, what he observes, that after the celebration of the council, St. Paul went back to Antioch; afterwards into Syria and Cilicia, to preach the gospel; thence into Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia; from whence he went into Macedonia, and first preached at Philippi,

<sup>1</sup> H. Vales. Annot. in Euseb. lib. ii. c. 18, p. 37.

then at Thessalonica and Bercea, afterwards stayed some considerable time at Athens, and last of all went to Corinth, where he met with Aquila and Priscilla, lately come from Italy, banished Rome, with the rest of the Jews, by the decree of Claudius ; all which, by an easy and reasonable computation, can make up no less than three years at least.

6. That which caused Baronius to split upon so many rocks, was not so much want of seeing them, which a man of his parts and industry could not but in a great measure see, as the unhappy necessity of defending those unsound principles which he had undertaken to maintain. For being to make good Peter's five-and-twenty years' presidency over the church of Rome, he was forced to confound times, and dislocate stories, that he might bring all his ends together. What foundation this story of Peter's being five-and-twenty years bishop of Rome has in antiquity, I find not; unless it sprang from hence, that Eusebius places Peter's coming to Rome in the second year of Claudius, and his martyrdom in the fourteenth of Nero; between which there is just the space of five-and-twenty years; whence those that came after concluded that he sat bishop there all that time. It cannot be denied but that in St. Jerome's translation it is expressly said, that he continued five-and-twenty years bishop of that city: but then it is as evident that this was his own addition, who probably set things down as the report went in his time, no such thing being to be found in the Greek copy of Eusebius.<sup>1</sup> Nor indeed does he ever there or

<sup>1</sup> Πέτρος ὁ κορυφαῖος τὴν ἐν Ἀντιοχείᾳ πρώτην θεμελιώσας ἐκκλησίαν εἰς Ῥώμην ἀπεισι κηρύττων τὸ εὐαγγέλιον. Χρον. Καν. ad num. ΜΓ. p. 204.

elsewhere positively affirm St. Peter to have been bishop of Rome, but only that he preached the gospel there; and expressly affirms, that he and St. Paul being dead, Linus was the first bishop of Rome.<sup>1</sup> To which I may add, that when the ancients speak of the bishops of Rome, and the first originals of that church, they equally attribute the founding and the episcopacy and government of it to Peter and Paul, making the one as much concerned in it as the other. Thus Epiphanius,<sup>2</sup> reckoning up the bishops of that see, places Peter and Paul in the front, as the first bishops of Rome; ἐν Ῥώμῃ γὰρ γεγωνασι πρῶτοι Πέτρος καὶ Παῦλος, οἱ ἀποστόλοι αὐτοὶ καὶ ἐπίσκοποι: "Peter and Paul, apostles, became the first bishops of Rome; then Linus," &c. And again, a little after; ἡ τῶν ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἐπισκόπων διαδοχὴ ταύτην ἔχει τὴν ἀκολουθίαν: "The succession of the bishops of Rome was in this manner; Peter and Paul, Linus, Cletus," &c. And Hege-sippus, speaking of their coming to Rome, equally says of them, that they were *Doctores Christianorum, sublimes operibus, clari magisterio*.<sup>3</sup> "The instructors of the Christians, admirable for miracles, and renowned for their authority." However, granting not only that he was there, but that he

<sup>1</sup> Hist. Eccles. lib. iii. c. 2, p. 71.

The words of Eusebius are, that Clemens was the third among the bishops from Peter and Paul; Linus having been the first, and Anencletus the second. On this passage the learned editor, Valesius observes, that it is not to be supposed that Paul was more honourable than Peter because named first; that in the seals of the Roman church he was placed on the right hand, and Peter on the left; and that though Eusebius indeed does not here number the apostles in the order of bishops, he, in his Chronicon, ascribes the Roman episcopacy to Peter alone.

<sup>2</sup> Contr. Carpocrat. Hæres. xxvii. p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> De excid. Jud. lib. iii. c. 2, p. 292.

was bishop, and that for five-and-twenty years together, yet what would this make for the unlimited sovereignty and universality of that church, unless a better evidence than 'feed my sheep' could be produced for its uncontrollable supremacy and dominion over the whole Christian world?

7. The sum is this: granting what none that has any reverence for antiquity will deny, that St. Peter was at Rome; he probably came thither some few years before his death, joined with and assisted St. Paul in preaching of the gospel, and then both sealed the testimony of it with their blood. The date of his death is differently assigned by the ancients. Eusebius<sup>1</sup> places it in the year 69, in the fourteenth of Nero; Epiphanius in the twelfth.<sup>2</sup> That which seems to me most probable is, that it was in the tenth, or the year 65; which I thus compute. Nero's burning of Rome is placed by Tacitus,<sup>3</sup> under the consulship of C. Lecanius and M. Licinius, about the month of July, that is, anno Chr. 64. This act procured him the infinite hatred and clamours of the people, which having in vain endeavoured several ways to remove and pacify, he at last resolved upon this project, to drive the odium upon the Christians; whom therefore, both to appease the gods and please the people, he condemned as guilty of the fact, and caused to be executed with all manner of acute and exquisite tortures. This persecution we may suppose began about the end of that, or the beginning of the following year. And under this persecution, I doubt not, it was that St. Peter suffered, and changed earth for heaven.

<sup>1</sup> Chron. p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Hæres. 27. p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Annal. lib. xv. c. 38, 41. p. 316, &c.

## AN APPENDIX

TO THE PRECEDING SECTION,

*Containing a vindication of St. Peter's being at Rome.*

FINDING the truth of what is supposed and granted in the foregoing section, to wit, St. Peter's going to and suffering at Rome, not only doubted of heretofore in the beginning of the Reformation, while the paths of antiquity were less frequented and beaten out; but now again, lately, in this broad daylight of ecclesiastical knowledge, not only called in question, but exploded as most vain and fabulous, and that especially by a foreign professor of name and note,<sup>1</sup> it may not be amiss, having the opportunity of this impression, to make some few remarks for the better clearing of this matter.

2. And first, I observe that this matter of fact is attested by witnesses of the most remote antiquity, persons of great eminency and authority, and who lived near enough to those times to know the truth and certainty of those things which they reported. And perhaps there is scarce any one piece of an-

<sup>1</sup> Fred. Spanhem. Dissert. de temere credita Petri in urb. Romam profectione. L. Bat. edit 1679. Vid. etiam Brutum Fulmen, or Observations on the Bull against Queen Elizabeth, p. 88, &c. Lond. 1681. 4.

Spanhiem, the author alluded to, is a writer of great learning and ability, but he expresses his opinions with the spirit of a controversialist; and not only disputes facts which contradict his views, but too frequently ascribes the actions and sentiments of those to whom he is opposed to false motives.—ED.



cient church history for which there is more clear, full, and constant evidence, than there is for this. Not to insist on that passage of Ignatius,<sup>1</sup> in his epistle to the Romans, which seems yet to look this way, it is expressly asserted by Papias, bishop of Hierapolis or Phrygia, who (as Irenæus tells us<sup>2</sup>) was scholar to St. John, and fellow-pupil with St. Polycarp; and though we should, with Eusebius,<sup>3</sup> suppose it was not St. John the apostle, whose scholar he was, but another surnamed the Elder, that lived at Ephesus, yet will this set him very little lower in point of time. Now, Papias says<sup>4</sup> not only that St. Peter was at Rome, and preached the Christian faith there, but that he wrote thence his first epistle, and by his authority confirmed the gospel, which St. Mark, his disciple and follower, at the request of the Romans, had drawn up. And that we may see that he did not carelessly take up these things as common hearsays, it was his custom, wherever he met with any that had conversed with the apostles, to pick up what memoirs he could meet with concerning them; and particularly to inquire what Andrew, what Peter, what Philip, what Thomas or James, or the rest of the disciples of our Lord, had either said or done. Which sufficiently shows what care he took to derive the most accurate notices of these matters.

3. Next Papias comes Irenæus, a man, as St. Jerome styles him,<sup>5</sup> of the apostolic times; and was, he tells us, Papias's own scholar; however,

<sup>1</sup> Οὐχ ὡς Πέτρος ἢ Παῦλος διατάσσομαι ὑμῖν· ἐκεῖνοι Ἀπόστολοι, ἐγὼ κατὰκριτος.—Ep. ad Rom. p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Advers. Hæres. lib. v. c. 33, p. 498.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. iii. cap. 39, p. 110.

<sup>4</sup> Ap. Euseb. lib. ii. c. 15, p. 53.

<sup>5</sup> Epist. ad Theod. p. 196.

it is certain, from his own account<sup>1</sup> that he was disciple to St. Polycarp, a man famous for his learning, gravity, and piety, throughout the whole Christian world. About the year 179 he was made bishop of the metropolitan church of Lyons, in France; a little before which he had been dispatched upon a message to Rome, and had conversed with the great men there. Now, his testimony in this case is uncontrollable; for he says, that Peter and Paul preached the gospel at Rome, and founded a church there;<sup>2</sup> and elsewhere, that the great and most ancient church of Rome was founded and constituted by the two glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; and that these blessed apostles, having founded this church, delivered the episcopal care of it over unto Linus.<sup>3</sup> Contemporary with Irenæus, or rather a little before him, was Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, a man of singular eminency and authority in those times; who, in an epistle which he wrote to the church of Rome,<sup>4</sup> compares the plantation of Christianity which Peter and Paul had made both at Rome and Corinth; and says farther, that after they had sown the seeds of the evangelical doctrine at Corinth, they went together into Italy, where they taught the faith, and suffered martyrdom.

4. Towards the latter end of the second century flourished Clemens of Alexandria, presbyter of that church, and regent of the catechetical school there who, in his book of Institutions, gives the very same testimony which we quoted from Papias be-

<sup>1</sup> Ap. Euseb. lib. v. c. 20, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 1, p. 229.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. c. 3, p. 232.

<sup>4</sup> Ap. Euseb. lib. ii. c. 25, p. 66.

fore;<sup>1</sup> they being both brought in by Eusebius as joint evidence in this matter. Tertullian, who lived much about the same time at Carthage, that Clemens did at Alexandria, and had been, as is probable, more than once at Rome, affirms most expressly, more than once and again,<sup>2</sup> that the church of Rome was happy in having its doctrine sealed with apostolic blood; and that Peter was crucified in that place, or, as he expresses it, *passioni Dominicæ adequatus*; that Peter<sup>3</sup> baptized in Tiber, as John the Baptist had done in Jordan and elsewhere; that when Nero first dyed the yet tender faith at Rome with the blood of its professors, then it was that Peter was girt by another, and bound to the cross.<sup>4</sup>

5. Next to Tertullian succeeds Caius, an ecclesiastical person, as Eusebius calls him, flourishing in the year 204, in the time of pope Zephyrin; who, in a book which he wrote against Proclus, one of the heads of the Cataphrygian sect, speaking concerning the places where the bodies of St. Peter and St. Paul were buried, has these words: "I am able to show the very tombs of the apostles; for whether you go into the Vatican or into the Via Ostiensis, you will meet with the sepulchres of those that founded that church,"<sup>5</sup> meaning the church of Rome. The last witness whom I shall produce in this case is Origen, a man justly revered for his great learning and piety; and who took a journey to Rome while pope Zephyrin yet

<sup>1</sup> Loc. supra citato.

<sup>2</sup> De Præscript. Hæret. cap. 36, p. 215.

<sup>3</sup> De Baptism. cap. 4, p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> Scorpiæ. cap. ult. p. 500.

<sup>5</sup> Ap. Euseb. lib. ii. c. 25, p. 67.

lived, on purpose, as himself tells us,<sup>1</sup> to behold that church, so venerable for its antiquity; and therefore cannot but be supposed very inquisitive to satisfy himself in all, especially the ecclesiastical antiquities of that place. Now he expressly says of Peter,<sup>2</sup> that after he had preached to the dispersed Jews of the eastern parts, he came at last to Rome, where, according to his own request, he was crucified with his head downwards. Lower than Origen I need not descend; it being granted by those who oppose this story,<sup>3</sup> that in the time of Origen, the report of St. Peter's going to, and suffering martyrdom at Rome, was commonly received in the Christian church. And now I would fain know, what one passage of those ancient times can be proved either by more, or by more considerable evidence than this is: and, indeed, considering how small a portion of the writings of those first ages of the church have been transmitted to us, there is much greater cause rather to wonder that we should have so many witnesses in this case, than that we have no more.

6. Secondly; I observe that the arguments brought to shake the credit of this story, and the exceptions made to these ancient testimonies, are very weak and trifling, and altogether unbecoming the learning and gravity of those that make them. For arguments against it, what can be more weak and inconcluding than to assert the fabulousness of this story,<sup>4</sup> because no mention is made of it by St. Luke, in the apostolical history; no footsteps of it

<sup>1</sup> Ap. Euseb. lib. vi. c. 14, p. 216.

<sup>2</sup> Tom. iii. Exposit. in Gen. ap. Euseb. lib. iii. c. 1, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup> Span. ib. c. iii. n. 35, p. 130.

<sup>4</sup> Id. ib. c. 2, n. 3, p. 22.

to be found in any of St. Paul's epistles written from Rome: as if he might not come thither time enough after the accounts of the sacred story do expire. That St. Peter was never at Rome, because Clemens Romanus says nothing of it in his epistle to the Corinthians, when yet he mentions St. Paul's coming to the bounds of the west;<sup>1</sup> and what yet is more absurd, because no notice is taken of it by the Roman historians\* who wrote the acts of that age; especially Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dio: as if these great writers had had nothing else to do but to fill their commentaries with accounts concerning Christians, whom it is plain they despised and scorned, and looked upon as a contemptible, execrable sort of men; and therefore very little beside the bare mention of them, and that too but rarely, is to be met with in any of their writings; much less can it be expected that they should give an account of the accidents and circumstances of particular Christians: besides that, this whole way of reasoning is negative, and purely depends upon the silence of some few authors, which can signify nothing where there is such a current and uncontrollable tradition, and so many positive authorities to the contrary. And yet these are the best, and almost only arguments that are offered in this matter.

7. And of no greater force or weight are the exceptions made to the testimonies of the ancients, which we have produced, as will appear by a summary enumeration of the most material of them. Against Papias's evidence, it is excepted, that he

<sup>1</sup> Ib. n. 16, p. 45.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. n. 17, p. 47.

was *Σφόδρα σμικρὸς τὸν νῦν*,<sup>1</sup> as Eusebius characterizes him, "a man of a very weak and undiscerning judgment," and that he derived several things strange and unheard of from mere tradition. But all this is said of him by Eusebius, only upon the account of some doctrinal principles and opinions, and some rash and absurd expositions of our Saviour's doctrine, carelessly taken up from others, and handed down without due examination; particularly his millenary or Chiliastic notions: but what is this to invalidate his testimony in the case before us, a matter of a quite different nature from those mentioned by Eusebius? May not a man be mistaken in abstruse speculations, and yet be fit enough to judge in ordinary cases? As if none but a man of acute parts and a subtile apprehension, one able to pierce into the reasons, consistency, and consequences of doctrinal conclusions, were capable to deliver down matters of fact, things fresh in memory, done within much less than a hundred years; in themselves highly probable, and wherein no interest could be served, either for him to deceive others, or for others to deceive him.

8. Against Irenæus it is put in bar, that he gave not this testimony till after his return from Rome;<sup>2</sup> that is, about a hundred and forty years after St. Peter's first pretended coming thither; which is no great abatement in a testimony of so remote antiquity, when they had so many evidences and opportunities of satisfying themselves in the truth of things, which to us are utterly lost. That before his time many frivolous traditions began to take

<sup>1</sup> Id. ib. c. 3, n. 8, p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. n. 20, p. 100.

place, and that he himself is sometimes mistaken ; the proper inference from which, if pursued to its just issue, must be this, either that he is always mistaken, or at least that he is so in this.

9. The authority of Dionysius of Corinth is thrown off with this, that it is of no greater value than that of Irenæus :<sup>1</sup> that churches then began to emulate each other, by pretending to be of apostolical foundation ; and that Dionysius herein consulted the honour of his own church, by deriving upon it the authority of those two great apostles Peter and Paul ; and in that respect setting it on the same level with Rome : which yet is a mere suggestion of his own, and so far as it respects Dionysius, is said without any just warrant from antiquity. Besides, his testimony itself is called in question,<sup>2</sup> for affirming that Peter and Paul went together from Corinth into Italy, and there taught and suffered martyrdom at the same time. Against their coming together to Corinth, and thence passing into Italy, nothing is brought ; but that the account St. Luke gives of the travels and preachings of these apostles is not consistent with St. Peter's coming to Rome under Claudius ; which let them look to whose interest it is that it should be so ; I mean them of the church of Rome. And for his saying that they suffered martyrdom *κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν καιρὸν*, at the same time ; it does not necessarily imply their suffering the same day and year, but admits of some considerable distance of time : it being elsewhere granted by our author,<sup>3</sup> that this phrase, *κατὰ τῆσαν τὸν χρόνον*, is often used by

<sup>1</sup> Ib. n. 26, p. 113.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. n. 27, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> Dissert. de Anno Convers. Paul. n. 17, p. 202.

Josephus in a lax sense, as including what happened within the compass of some years.

10. To enervate the testimony of Clemens Alexandrinus, it is said,<sup>1</sup> (with how little pretence of reason let any man judge,) that Eusebius quotes it out of a book of Clemens, that is now lost; and that he tells us not whence St. Clemens derived the report: that abundance of apocryphal writings were extant in his time; and that he himself inserts a great many frivolous traditions into his writings. Which if it were granted would do no service in this cause; unless it were asserted, that all things he says are doubtful or fabulous, because some few are so.

11. Much after the same rate it is argued against Tertullian,<sup>2</sup> that he was a man of great credulity; that he sets down some passages concerning St. John which are not related by other writers of those times; that he was mistaken in our Saviour's age at the time of his passion;<sup>3</sup> that he was imposed upon in the account he says Tiberius the emperor sent to the senate concerning Christ; which, forsooth, must needs be false, because no mention is made of it by Suetonius, Tacitus, or Dio.

12. The exceptions to Caius are no whit stronger than the former, viz.; that he flourished but in the beginning of the third century, when many false reports were set on foot; and that it is not reasonable to believe, that in those times of persecution the tombs of the apostles should be undefaced, and had in such public honour and veneration.<sup>4</sup> As if the places where the apostles were buried could not be familiarly known to Christians, without be-

<sup>1</sup> Ubi supra, n. 18, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Ib. n. 32, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> Ib. n. 31, p. 123.

<sup>4</sup> Ib. n. 28, 29.



ing commonly shown to their heathen persecutors, or without erecting pompous and stately monuments over their graves, to provoke the rage and malice of their enemies to fall foul upon them.

13. Against Origen, nothing is pretended, but what is notoriously vain and frivolous;<sup>1</sup> as, that perhaps his reports concerning the travels of the apostles are not sufficiently certain: that in some other cases he produces testimonies out of apocryphal writings; and that many things are reported concerning himself which are at best obscure and ambiguous; and that Baronius and Valesius cannot agree about the time of his journey to Rome. I have but lightly touched upon most of these exceptions, because the very mention of them is enough to supersede a studied and operose confutation; and, indeed, they are generally such as may with equal force be levelled almost against any ancient history.

14. Thirdly; I observe how far zeal, even for the best cause, may sometimes transport learned men to secure it by undue and imprudent methods; and such as one would think were made use of rather to show the acumen and subtilty of the author, than any strength or cogency in the arguments.<sup>2</sup> Plain it is, that they who set themselves to undermine this story, design therein to serve the interests of the Protestant cause, against the vain and unjust pretences of the see of Rome, and utterly to subvert the very foundations of that title whereby

<sup>1</sup> Ib. n. 34, p. 129.

<sup>2</sup> The observation of Lord Bacon (*Advancement of Learning*, p. 1.) may be aptly applied to more than one class of disputants: "It is good to ask the question which Job asked of his friends, 'Will you lie for God, as one man will do for another?'"—ED.

they lay claim to St. Peter's power. This indeed, could it be fairly made good, and without offering violence to the authority of those ancient and venerable sages of the Christian church, would give a mortal blow to the Romish cause, and free us from several of their groundless and sophistical allegations. But when this cannot be done without calling in question the first and most early records of the church, and throwing off the authority of the ancients, *non tali auxilio*—truth needs no such weapons to defend itself, but is able to stand up, and triumph in its own strength, without calling in such indirect artifices to support it. We can safely grant the main of the story, that St. Peter did go to Rome, and came thither *ἐν τέλει*, (as Origen expressly says he did <sup>1</sup>) about the latter end of his life, and there suffered martyrdom for the faith of Christ; and yet this no disadvantage to ourselves; nay, it is that which utterly confounds all their accounts of things, and proves their pretended story of St. Peter's being twenty-five years bishop of that see, to be not only vain, but false, as has been sufficiently shown in the foregoing section. But to deny that St. Peter ever was at Rome, contrary to the whole stream and current of antiquity, and the unanimous consent of the most early writers,<sup>2</sup> and that merely upon little surmises, and trifling

<sup>1</sup> Exposit. in Gen. ubi supra.

<sup>2</sup> "Non habere mihi frontem videntur, qui hæc negant, repugnante omni antiquitate: quasi in historia aliundi sapere possimus, quam ex antiquorum monumentis."—J. G. Voss. *Harm. Evangel.* lib. iii. c. 4, p. 407.

"Omnes patres magno consensu asseruerunt Petrum Romam esse profectum, eamque ecclesiam administrasse. Et mihi quidem non facile vellicandus videtur tantus consensus."—Chamier. *Panstrat. Cath. de Rom. Pontif.* lib. xiii. c. 4, p. 483.

cavils; and in order thereunto to treat the reverend fathers, whose memories have ever been dear and sacred in the Christian church, with rude reflections and spiteful insinuations, is a course, I confess, not over ingenuous, and might give too much occasion to our adversaries of the church of Rome, to charge us (as they sometimes do, falsely enough) with a neglect of antiquity, and contempt of the fathers; but that it is notoriously known, that all the great names of the Protestant party, men most celebrated for learning and piety, have always paid a most just deference and veneration to antiquity; and upon that account have freely allowed this story of St. Peter's going to Rome, as our author, who opposes it, is forced to grant.<sup>1</sup>

15. Fourthly; it deserves to be considered, whether the needless questioning a story so well attested, may not in time open too wide a gap to shake the credit of all history. For if things done at so remote a distance of time, and which have all the evidence that can be desired to make them good, may be doubted of or denied, merely for the sake of some few weak and insignificant exceptions which may be made against them, what is there that can be secure? There are few passages of ancient history, against which a man of wit and parts may not start some objections, either from the writers of them, or from the account of the things themselves; and shall they therefore be presently discarded, or condemned to the number of the false or fabulous? If this liberty be indulged, farewell church history; nay, it is to be feared, whether the sacred story will be able long to maintain its

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. c. 1, n. 11, p. 17.

divine authority. We live in an age of great scepticism and infidelity, wherein men have, in a great measure, put off the reverence due to sacred things; and witty men seem much delighted to hunt our objections, bestow their censures, expose the credit of former ages, and to believe little but what themselves either see or hear. And therefore it will become wise and good men to be very tender how they loosen, much more remove the old landmarks which the fathers have set, lest we run ourselves before we be aware into a labyrinth and confusion, from whence it will not be easy to get out.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The value of these observations will be acknowledged by every candid inquirer after truth: nor can it be doubted but that, next to the generating of angry feeling, the greatest evil which results from the existence of religious disputes, is the habit of scepticism they foster, so that doubt is engendered with regard to one class of truths by the very process employed to subdue it in respect to another. This, however, is a consequence of the disingenuousness with which inquiries are pursued when undertaken in the spirit of partizanship, and is not a necessary attendant upon controversy, as the natural fruit of difference of opinion among men of active and inquisitive intellects. To question the reality of a fact which cannot be distinctly disproved is to place the system contended for in peril; for the moment it is allowed that the disputed circumstance is of such value to the opposite argument, that not to dispute it is to leave the adversary in possession of the field, one of these things must of necessity follow—either the testimony of history is invalidated by bold attacks on evidence sufficiently probable for conviction in all ordinary cases; or the victory remains on the side of those who have the fact, so confessedly important, for the support of their opinions.—ED.



## ST. PAUL.

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### SECTION I.

*Of St. Paul, from his Birth till his Conversion.*

THOUGH St. Paul was none of the twelve apostles, yet had he the honour of being an apostle extraordinary, and to be immediately called in a way peculiar to himself. He justly deserves a place next St. Peter; for as 'in their lives they were pleasant and lovely,' so 'in their death they were not divided;' especially if it be true, that they both suffered, not only for the same cause, but at the same time, as well as place. St. Paul was born at Tarsus, the metropolis of Cilicia; a city infinitely rich and populous: and what contributed more to the fame and honour of it, an academy furnished with schools of learning, where the scholars so closely plied their studies, that, as Strabo informs us, they excelled in all arts of polite learning and philosophy those of other places; yea, even of Alexandria and Athens itself; and that even Rome was beholden to it for many of its best professors.<sup>1</sup> It

<sup>1</sup> Geograph. lib. xvi. p. 403.

was a Roman municipium, or free corporation, invested with many franchises and privileges by Julius Cæsar and Augustus, who granted to the inhabitants of it the honours and immunities of citizens of Rome. In which respect St. Paul owned and asserted it as the privilege of his birthright, that he was a Roman, and thereby free from being bound or beaten.<sup>1</sup> True it is, that St. Jerome<sup>2</sup> (followed herein by one who himself travelled in those parts<sup>3</sup>) makes him born at Gischalis, a well-fortified town in Judæa, which being besieged and taken by the Roman army, his parents fled away with him and dwelt at Tarsus. But besides that this contradicts St. Paul, who expressly affirms that he was born at Tarsus, there needs no more to confute this opinion, than that St. Jerome elsewhere slights it as a fabulous report.<sup>4</sup>

2. His parents were Jews, and that of the ancient stock, not entering in by the gate of proselytism, but originally descended from that nation; which surely he means when he says, that he was ‘an Hebrew of the Hebrews;’ either because both his parents were Jews, or rather that all his ancestors had been so. They belonged to the tribe of Benjamin, whose founder was the youngest son of the old patriarch Jacob, who thus prophesied of him: ‘Benjamin shall raven as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.’<sup>5</sup> This prophetic character Tertullian, and others after him, will have to be accomplished in our apostle.<sup>6</sup> As a ‘ravening wolf

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxii. 25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> De script. Eccl. in Paul.

<sup>3</sup> Bellon. Observ. lib. ii. c. 99, p. 366.

<sup>4</sup> Com. in Philem. p. 263, tom. ix.

<sup>5</sup> Gen. xlix. 27.

<sup>6</sup> Adv. Marc. lib. v. c. 1, p. 461.

in the morning devouring the prey ;' that is, as a persecutor of the churches in the first part of his life, destroying the flock of God : ' in the evening dividing the spoil ;' that is, in his declining and reduced age, as doctor of the nations, feeding and distributing to Christ's sheep.

3. We find him described by two names in Scripture, one Hebrew and the other Latin ; probably referring both to his Jewish and Roman capacity and relation. The one Saul, a name frequent and common in the tribe of Benjamin ever since the first king of Israel, who was of that name, was chosen out of that tribe ; in memory whereof they were wont to give their children this name at their circumcision : his other was Paul, assumed by him, as some think, at his conversion, to denote his humility ; as others, in memory of his converting Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor ; in imitation of the generals and emperors of Rome, who were wont from the places and nations that they conquered to assume the name, as an additional honour and title to themselves : as Scipio Africanus, Cæsar Germanicus, Parthicus, Sarmaticus, &c. But this seems no way consistent with the great humility of this apostle. More probable therefore it is, what Origen thinks,<sup>1</sup> that he had a double name given him at his circumcision ; Saul, relating to his Jewish original, and Paul, referring to the Roman corporation where he was born : and this the Scripture seems to favour when it says, ' Saul, who is also called Paul.'<sup>2</sup> And this, perhaps, may be the reason why St. Luke, so long as

<sup>1</sup> Præfat. in Ep. ad Rom. fol. 132, tom. iiii.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. D. Lightf. Hor. Heb. in 1 ad Cor. c. 1, v. 1.



he speaks of him as conversant among the Jews in Syria, styles him Saul; but afterwards, when he left those parts and went among the Gentiles, he gives him the name of Paul, as a name more frequent and familiarly known to them: and, for the same reason, no doubt, he constantly calls himself by that name in all his epistles written to the Gentile churches. Or, if it was taken up by him afterwards, it was probably done at his conversion, according to the custom and manner of the Hebrews, who used many times, upon solemn and eminent occasions, especially upon their entering upon a more strict and religious course of life, to change their names, and assume one which they had not before.

4. In his youth he was brought up in the schools of Tarsus, fully instructed in all the liberal arts and sciences, whereby he became admirably acquainted with foreign and external authors. Together with which, he was brought up to a particular trade and course of life; according to the great maxim and principle of the Jews, that "He who teaches not his son a trade, teaches him to be a thief."<sup>1</sup> They thought it not only fit, but a necessary part of education, for their wisest and most learned rabbins to be brought up to a manual trade, whereby, if occasion was, they might be able to maintain themselves. Hence, as Drusius observes,<sup>2</sup> nothing more common in their writings, than to have them denominated from their callings, Rabbi Jose, the

כל שאינו מלמד ארץ בנו אומנוה כאילו מלמרו<sup>1</sup>  
ליססנור Talm. Tract. Kiddusch. c. 1, apud Buxtorf. in voc.  
אוסנור

<sup>2</sup> Annot in Acts, xviii. 3.

tanner, Rabbi Jochanan, the shoemaker, Rabbi Juda, the baker, &c. A custom taken up by the Christians, especially the monks and ascetics of the primitive times,<sup>1</sup> who, together with their strict profession, and almost incredible exercises of devotion, each took upon him a particular trade, whereat he daily wrought, and by his own hand-labour maintained himself. And this course of life the Jews were very careful should be free from all suspicion of scandal *אומנות נקייה* (as they call it),<sup>2</sup> a clean, that is, honest trade; being wont to say, "That he was happy that had his parents employed in an honest and commendable calling;" as he was miserable, who saw them conversant in any sordid and dishonest course of life. The trade our apostle was put to, was that of tent-making;<sup>3</sup> whereat he wrought, for some particular reasons, even after his calling to the apostolate. An honest but mean course of life; and, as Chrysostom observes,<sup>4</sup> an argument that his parents were not of the nobler and better rank; however, it was a useful and gainful trade, especially in those warlike countries, where armies had such frequent use of tents.

5. Having run through the whole circle of the sciences, and laid the sure foundations of human learning at Tarsus, he was by his parents sent to Jerusalem, to be perfected in the study of the law, and put under the tutorage of Rabban Gamaliel. This Gamaliel was the son of Rabban Symeon (probably presumed to be the same Symeon that came into the temple, and took Christ into his

<sup>1</sup> Epiph. 80, p. 451.

<sup>2</sup> Buxtorf. ubi supra.

<sup>3</sup> Acts, xviii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> De Laud. S. Paul. tom. v. p. 512.

arms<sup>1</sup>) president of the court of the sanhedrim: he was a doctor of the law, a person of great wisdom and prudence, and head at that time of one of the families of the schools at Jerusalem. A man of chief eminency and authority in the Jewish sanhedrim, and president of it at that very time when our blessed Saviour was brought before it. He lived to a great age, and was buried by Onkelos the proselyte, author of the Chaldee paraphrase, (one who infinitely loved and honoured him,) at his own vast expense and charge. He it was that made that wise and excellent speech in the sanhedrim, in favour of the apostles and their religion. Nay, he himself is said<sup>2</sup> (though I know not why) to have been a Christian; and his sitting among the senators to have been connived at by the apostles, that he might be the better friend to their affairs. Chrysippus,<sup>3</sup> presbyter of the church of Jerusalem, adds, that he was brother's son to Nicodemus, together with whom he and his son Abib were baptized by Peter and John. This account he derives from Lucian, a presbyter also of that church, under John, patriarch of Jerusalem; who in an epistle of his still extant, tells us, that he had this, together with some other things, communicated to him in a vision by Gamaliel himself; which, if true, no better evidence could be desired in this matter. At the feet of this Gamaliel, St. Paul tells us, he was brought up; alluding to the custom of the Jewish masters, who were wont to sit, while their disciples and scholars stood at their feet. Which honorary

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxii. 3, and iv. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Clem. Recognit. lib. i. p. 16, 17.

<sup>3</sup> Ap. Phot. Cod. 171, col. 384, extat Luciani hac de re Epist. ap Sur. ad 3 Aug. p. 31, et Baron ad Ann. 415.

custom continued till the death of this Gamaliel, and was then left off. Their own Talmud<sup>1</sup> telling us, "That since our old Rabban Gamaliel died, the honour of the law was perished, purity and pharisaism were destroyed." Which the gloss thus explains: "That whilst he lived, men were sound, and studied the law standing; but he being dead, weakness crept into the world, and they were forced to sit."

6. Under the tuition of this great master,<sup>2</sup> St. Paul was educated in the knowledge of the law, wherein he made such quick and vast improvements, that he soon outstripped his fellow-disciples. Amongst the various sects at that time in the Jewish church, he was especially educated in the principles and institutions of the Pharisees; of which sect was both his father and his master; whereof he became a most earnest and zealous professor: this being, as himself tells us, the strictest sect of their religion. For the understanding whereof, it may not be amiss a little to inquire into the temper and manner of this sect. Josephus,<sup>3</sup> though himself a Pharisee, gives this character of them; "That they were a crafty and subtile generation of men; and so perverse, even to princes themselves, that they would not fear, many times, openly to affront and oppose them." And so far had they insinuated themselves into the affections and estimations of the populacy, that their good or ill word was enough to make or blast any one with the people; who would implicitly believe them, let

<sup>1</sup> Sotah. c. 9, halac. 15, apud Lightf. in Hor. H. in Matt. xiii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Antiq. Jud. b. xvii. cap. 3, p. 585.

their report be never so false or malicious.<sup>1</sup> And therefore Alexander Jannæus, when he lay a-dying, wisely advised his queen by all means to comply with them, and to seem to govern by their counsel and direction; affirming that this had been the greatest cause of his fatal miscarriage, and that which had derived the odium of the nation upon him; that he had offended this sort of men. Certain it is, that they were infinitely proud and insolent, surly and ill-natured; that they hated all mankind but themselves, and censured whoever would not be of their way, as a villain and reprobate: greatly zealous to gather proselytes to their party, not to make them more religious, but more fierce and cruel, more carping and censorious, more heady and high-minded; in short, 'twofold more the children of the devil than they were before.' All religion and kindness was confined within the bounds of their own party; and the first principles wherewith they inspired their new converts were, that none but they were the godly party, and that all other persons were slaves and sons of the earth; and therefore especially endeavoured to inspire them with a mighty zeal and fierceness against all that differed from them; so that if any one did but speak a good word of our Saviour, he should be presently excommunicated and cast out, persecuted and devoted to the death. To this end they were wont not only to separate, but discriminate themselves from the herd and community, by some peculiar notes and badges of distinction; such as their long robes, broad phylacteries, and the large fringes and borders of their garments, whereby

<sup>1</sup> Antiq. Jud. lib. xiii. c. 23, p. 463.

they made themselves known from the rest of men. These dogged and ill-natured principles, together with their seditious, unnatural, unjust, unmerciful, and uncharitable behaviour, which otherwise would have made them stink above ground in the nostrils of men, they sought to palliate and varnish over with a more than ordinary pretence and profession of religion; but were especially active and diligent in what cost them little, the outward instances of religion: such duties especially as did more immediately refer to God; as frequent fasting and praying, which they did very often and very long, with demure and mortified looks, in a whining and an affected tone, and this in almost every corner of the streets; and indeed so contrived the scheme of their religion, that what they did might appear above-ground, where they might be seen of men to the best advantage.

7. Though this seems to have been the general temper and disposition of the party, yet doubtless there were some amongst them of better and honester principles than the rest. In which number we have just reason to reckon our apostle; who yet was deeply leavened with the active and fiery genius of the sect; not able to brook any opposite party in religion, especially if late and novel. Inso-much, that when the Jews were resolved to do execution upon Stephen, he stood by and kept the clothes of them that did it. Whether he was any further engaged in the death of this innocent and good man we do not find. However, this was enough loudly to proclaim his approbation and consent. And therefore, elsewhere, we find him indicting himself for this fact, and pleading guilty. 'When the blood of thy martyr Stephen was shed,

I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.<sup>1</sup> God chiefly inspects the heart, and if the vote be passed there, writes the man guilty, though he stir no further. It is easy to murder another by a silent wish, or a passionate desire. In all moral actions God values the will for the deed, and reckons the man a companion in the sin, who, though possibly he may never actually join in it, does yet inwardly applaud and like it. The storm thus begun increased apace: and a violent persecution began to arise, which miserably afflicted and dispersed the Christians at Jerusalem. In which our apostle was a prime agent and minister, raging about in all parts with a mad and ungovernable zeal, searching out the saints, beating them in the synagogues, compelling many to blaspheme, imprisoning others, and procuring them to be put to death. Indeed, he was a kind of *inquisitor hæreticæ pravitatis* to the high-priest, by whom he was employed to hunt and find out these upstart heretics,<sup>2</sup> who preached against the law of Moses and the traditions of the fathers. Accordingly, having made strange havoc at Jerusalem, he addressed himself to the Sanhedrim, and there took out a warrant and commission to go down and ransack the synagogues at Damascus.<sup>3</sup> How eternally insatiable is fury and a mis-

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxii. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. ix. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Damascus is distant from Jerusalem about one hundred and thirty miles, and was once the capital of Syria. It was still, when St. Paul visited it, one of the wealthiest and most splendid cities of the east; and, like the rest of the country, was under the dominion of the Romans. Had the object of Saul been otherwise than of a purely religious nature, he must have referred to the heathen governor for the desired remedy; but the Romans, with their accustomed policy, had left the con-

guided zeal! How restless and unwearied in its designs of cruelty! It had already sufficiently harassed the poor Christians at Jerusalem; but not content to have vexed them there, and to have driven them thence, it persecuted them unto 'strange cities;' following them even to Damascus itself, whither many of these persecuted Christians had fled for shelter; resolving to bring up those whom he found there to Jerusalem, in order to their punishment and execution. For the Jewish Sanhedrim had not only power of seizing and scourging offenders against their law, within the bounds of their own country, but, by the connivance and favour of the Romans, might send into other countries, where there were any synagogues that acknowledged a dependance in religious matters upon the council at Jerusalem, to apprehend them; as here they sent Paul to Damascus to fetch up what Christians he could find, to be arraigned and sentenced at Jerusalem.

8. But God, who had designed him for work of another nature, and 'separated him from his mother's womb to the preaching of the gospel,'<sup>1</sup> stopped him in his journey. For while he was, together with his company, travelling on the road, not far

quered people to arrange their religious affairs according to their own wishes; and though the authority of the Sanhedrim could not properly be regarded as extending to Damascus, the stretch of power was allowed, since the price of conciliating so strong a party as the Pharisees would, in this instance, be only the sacrifice of some unknown and, perhaps, seditious individuals. It has been remarked on this subject, that the power of the Sanhedrim and the high-priest, like the authority of the pope by the Papists, was acknowledged by the Jews of all countries; but of course it could only be exercised by the sufferance of the civil magistrate.—E.D.

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 15.



from Damascus, on a sudden a gleam of light, beyond the splendour and brightness of the sun, was darted from heaven upon them; whereat, being strangely amazed and confounded, they all fell to the ground, a voice calling to him, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' To which he replied, 'Lord, who art thou?' Who told him, that 'he was Jesus whom he persecuted;' that what was done to the members was done to the head; that it was hard for him 'to kick against the pricks;' that he now appeared to him to make choice of him for a 'minister' and a 'witness' of what he had now seen and should after hear; that he would stand by him, and preserve him, and make him a great instrument in the conversion of the Gentile world. This said, he asked our Lord 'what he would have him to do;' who bade him go into the city, where he should receive his answer. St. Paul's companions, who had been present at this transaction,<sup>1</sup> heard the voice, but saw not him that spoke to him; though elsewhere the apostle himself affirms, that they 'saw the light, but heard not the voice' of him that spake: that is, they heard a confused sound, but not a distinct and articulate voice; or, more probably, being ignorant of the Hebrew language, wherein our Lord spake to St. Paul, they heard the words, but knew not the sense and meaning of them.

9. St. Paul by this time was gotten up, but though he found his feet, yet he had lost his eyes, being stricken blind with the extraordinary brightness of the light; and was accordingly led by his companions into Damascus. In which condition he there remained, fasting three days together. At

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxii. 9.

this time we may probably suppose it was, that he had that vision and ecstasy, wherein he was taken up into the 'third heaven,'<sup>1</sup> where he saw and heard things great and unutterable, and was fully instructed in the mysteries of the gospel; and hence expressly affirms, that he was not 'taught the gospel which he preached by man, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.'<sup>2</sup> There was, at this time, at Damascus one Ananias, a very devout and religious man, (one of the seventy disciples, as the ancients inform us, and probably the first planter of the Christian church in this city,) and though a Christian, yet of great reputation amongst all the Jews. To him our Lord appeared, commanding him to go into such a street, and to such a house, and there 'inquire for one Saul of Tarsus,' who was now at prayer, and had seen him in a vision coming to him, to lay his hands upon him, that he might receive his sight. Ananias startled at the name of the man, having heard of his bloody temper and practices, and upon what errand he was now come down to the city. But our Lord, to take off his fears, told him, that he mistook the man, that he had now taken him to be a chosen vessel, to preach the gospel both to Jews and Gentiles, and before the greatest potentates upon earth, acquainting him with what great things he should both do and suffer for his sake; what chains and imprisonments, what racks and scourges, what hunger and thirst, what shipwrecks and death he should undergo. Upon this Ananias went, laid his hands upon him, told him that our Lord had sent him to him that he might receive his sight, and be filled with the Holy

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. i. 10, 11.

Ghost ; which was no sooner done, but thick films, like scales, fell from his eyes, and his sight returned. And the next thing he did was to be baptized, and solemnly initiated into the Christian faith. After which he joined himself to the disciples of that place, to the equal joy and wonder of the church, that the wolf should so soon lay down its fierceness, and put on the meek nature of a lamb ; that he who had lately been so violent a persecutor, should now become not a professor only, but a preacher of that faith which before he had routed and destroyed.

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## SECTION II.

### *Of St. Paul, from his Conversion till the Council at Jerusalem.*

SAINT Paul staid not long at Damascus after his conversion,<sup>1</sup> but having received an immediate intimation from heaven, probably in the ecstasy wherein he was caught up thither, he waited for no other counsel or direction in the case, lest he should seem to derive his mission and authority from men, and ‘ being not disobedient to the heavenly vision,’ he presently retired out of the city ; and the sooner, probably, to decline the odium of

<sup>1</sup> Our author dates the conversion of the apostle some years earlier than other writers. Lardner, after a very careful review of different circumstances and testimonies, concludes that it most probably took place about the year 36 or 37.—Works. vol. vi. p. 241.—ED.

the Jews, and the effects of that rage and malice which he was sure would pursue and follow him. He withdrew into the parts of Arabia, (those parts of it that lay next to the χώρα Δαμασκήνη,<sup>1</sup> the 'region of Damascus;' nay, Damascus itself was sometimes accounted part of Arabia, as we shall note by and by from Tertullian,) where he spent the first-fruits of his ministry, preaching up and down for three years together. After which he returned back to Damascus,<sup>2</sup> preached openly in the synagogues, and convinced the Jews of Christ's messiahship, and the truth of his religion. Angry and enraged hereat, they resolved his ruin; which they knew no better way to effect, than by exasperating and incensing the civil powers against him. Damascus was a place not more venerable for its antiquity, (if not built by, at least it gave title to Abraham's steward, hence called Eliezer of Damascus,) than it was considerable for its strength, stateliness, and situation: it was the noblest city of all Syria, (as Justin of old,<sup>3</sup> and the Arabian geographer,<sup>4</sup> has since informed us; and the prophet Isaiah<sup>5</sup> before both, calls it ראש ארם "the head of Syria,") seated in a most healthful air, in a most fruitful soil, watered with most pleasant fountains and rivers, rich in merchandize, adorned with stately buildings, goodly and magnificent temples, and fortified with strong guards and garrisons; in all which respects, Julian<sup>6</sup> calls it the holy and great Damascus, ἡ τὸν τῆς Ἑφᾶς ἀπάσης ὀφθαλμὸν, "the eye of the whole east." Situate it

<sup>1</sup> Gal. i. 17, 18.<sup>2</sup> Acts, ix. 23; 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33.<sup>3</sup> Justin. lib. xxxvi. c. 2, p. 425.<sup>4</sup> Geograph. Nub. clim. 3, part. 5, p. 116.<sup>5</sup> Isa. vii. 7.<sup>6</sup> Epist. xxiv. p. 145.

was between Libanus and Mount Hermon ; and though probably belonging to Syria, yet *Arabia retro deputabatur* (as Tertullian tells us<sup>1</sup>) was anciently reckoned to Arabia. Accordingly at this time it was under the government of Aretas,<sup>2</sup> (father-in-law to Herod Antipas, the tetrarch, whose daughter the said Herod had married, but afterwards turned off; which became the occasion of a war between those two princes,) king of Arabia Petrea, a prince tributary to the Roman empire. By him there was an *εθνάρχης*, or governor, who had jurisdiction over the whole Syria Damascena, placed over it, who kept constant residence in the city, as a place of very great importance. To him the Jews made their address, with crafty and cunning insinuations, persuading him to apprehend St. Paul, possibly under the notion of a spy, there being war at this time between the Romans and that king. Hereupon the gates were shut, and extraordinary guards set, and all engines that could be laid to take him. But the disciples, to prevent their cruel designs, at night put him into a basket, and let him down over the city wall. And the place, we are told,<sup>3</sup> is still showed to travellers, not far from the gate, thence called St. Paul's gate at this day.

2. Having thus made his escape, he set forwards for Jerusalem, where when he arrived, he addressed himself to the church.<sup>4</sup> But they, knowing the former temper and principles of the man, universally shunned his company; till Barnabas brought him to Peter, who was not yet cast into prison, and

<sup>1</sup> Adv. Marc. lib. iii. c. 13, p. 404.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. Joseph. Antiq. lib. xviii. c. 7, p. 626.

<sup>3</sup> G. Sion. et J. Hesron. de Urb. Orient. c. 4, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Acts, ix. 26; Gal. i. 18, 19.

to James, our Lord's brother, bishop of Jerusalem, acquainting them with the manner of his conversion; and by them he was familiarly entertained. Here he staid fifteen days, preaching Christ, and confuting the Hellenist Jews with a mighty courage and resolution. But snares were here again laid to entrap him; as malice can as well cease to be, as to be restless and active. Whereupon he was warned by God in a vision, that his testimony would not find acceptance in that place; that therefore he should leave it, and betake himself to the Gentiles. Accordingly, being conducted by the brethren to Cæsarea,<sup>1</sup> he set sail for Tarsus, his native city; from whence, not long after, he was fetched by Barnabas to Antioch,<sup>2</sup> to assist him in propagating Christianity in that place: in which employment they continued there a whole year. And now it was that the disciples of the religion were at this place first called Christians; according to the manner of all other institutions, who were wont to take their denominations from the first authors and founders of them. Before this they were usually styled Nazarenes,<sup>3</sup> as being the disciples and followers of Jesus of Nazareth, a name by which the Jews in scorn call them to this day, with the same intent that the Gentiles of old used to call them Galileans. The name of Nazarenes was henceforward fixed upon those Jewish converts, who mixed the law and the gospel, and compounded a religion out of Judaism and Christianity. The fixing this honourable name upon the disciples of the crucified Jesus was done at

<sup>1</sup> Acts, ix. 30.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. xi. 26.

<sup>3</sup> Ναζαραῖοι τὸ παλαιὸν ἡμεῖς οἱ νῦν χριστιανοί.—Euseb. de loc. Hebr. in voc. Ναζαρέθ.

Antioch, (as an ancient historian informs us<sup>1</sup>) about the beginning of Claudius's reign, ten years after Christ's ascension; nay, he further adds, that Euodius, lately ordained bishop of that place, was the person that imposed this name upon them, styling them Christians, who before were called Nazarenes and Galileans: Τῷ αὐτῷ ἐπισκόπῳ Ἐνοδίῳ προσομιλήσαντος αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἐπιθήσαντος αὐτοῖς τὸ ὄνομα τῆτο. πρῶην γάρ Ναζαραῖοι ἐκαλεῖντο, καὶ Γαλιλαῖοι ἐκαλεῖντο οἱ χριστιανοί, as my author's words are. I may not omit, what a learned man has observed,<sup>2</sup> that the word *χρηματίσαι*, used by St. Luke, (they were called,) implies the thing to have been done by some public and solemn act and declaration of the whole church; such being the use of the word in the imperial edicts and proclamations of those times, the emperors being said *χρηματίζειν*, "to style themselves," when they publicly proclaimed by what titles they would be called. When any province submitted itself to the Roman empire, the emperor was wont by public edict, *χρηματίζειν ἑαυτὸν* to entitle himself to the government and jurisdiction of it, and the people to several great privileges and immunities. In a grateful sense whereof, the people usually made this time the solemn date of their common epocha, or computation. Thus (as the forementioned historian informs us<sup>3</sup>) it was in the particular case of Antioch; and thence their public æra was called *χρηματισμὸς τῶν Ἀντιοχείων*, "the ascription of the people at Antioch." Such being the general acceptation of the word, St. Luke, (who was himself a native of this city) makes

<sup>1</sup> Joan. Antiochen. in Chronol. MS. à Selden, cit. de Synedr. lib. i. c. 8, p. 226. Vid. Suid. in voc. Ναζαραῖος.

<sup>2</sup> Greg. not. et obs. cap. 36. <sup>3</sup> J. Antioch. Chron. lib. ix.

use of it to express that solemn declaration whereby the disciples of the religion entitled themselves to the name of Christians.

3. It happened, about this time, that a terrible famine, foretold by Agabus,<sup>1</sup> afflicted several parts of the Roman empire, but especially Judæa; the consideration whereof made the Christians at Antioch compassionate the case of their suffering brethren, and they accordingly raised considerable contributions for their relief and succour, which they sent to Jerusalem by Barnabas and Paul; who having dispatched their errand in that city, went back to Antioch; where, while they were joining in the public exercises of their religion, it was revealed to them by the Holy Ghost, that they should set apart Paul and Barnabas to preach the gospel in other places;<sup>2</sup> which was done accordingly, and they, by prayer, fasting, and imposition of hands, were immediately deputed for that service. Hence they departed to Seleucia, and thence sailed to Cyprus, where at Salamis, a great city in that island, they preached in the synagogues of the Jews. Hence they removed to Paphos, the residence of Sergius Paulus, the præconsul of the island, a man of great wisdom and prudence, but miserably seduced by the wicked artifices of Bar-Jesus, a Jewish impostor, who calling himself Elymas, or the magician, vehemently opposed the apostles, and kept the præconsul from embracing of the faith. Nay, one who pretends to be ancient enough to know it,<sup>3</sup> seems to intimate, that he not only spake, but wrote against St. Paul's doctrine, and the faith of

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xi. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Acts, xiii. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Dionys. Areop. de divin. nomin. c. 8. p. 623.



Christ. However, the proconsul calls for the apostles, and St. Paul first takes Elymas to task; and having severely checked him for his malicious opposing of the truth, told him, that the divine vengeance was now ready to seize upon him. Upon which he was immediately struck blind. The vengeance of God observing herein a kind of just proportion, that he should be punished with the loss of his bodily eyes, who had so wilfully and maliciously shut the eyes of his mind against the light of the gospel, and had endeavoured to keep not only himself, but others under so much blindness and darkness. This miracle turned the scale with the proconsul, and quickly brought him over a convert to the faith.

4. After this success in Cyprus, he went to Perga, in Pamphylia,<sup>1</sup> where taking Titus along with him in the room of Mark, who was returned to Jerusalem, they went to Antioch, the metropolis of Pisidia:<sup>2</sup> where entering into the Jewish synagogue on the Sabbath-day, after some sections of the law were read, they were invited by the rulers of the synagogue to discourse a little to the people; which St. Paul did in a large and eloquent sermon, wherein he put them in mind of the many great and particular blessings which God had heaped upon the Jews, from the first originals of that nation; that he had crowned them all with the sending of his Son to be the Messiah and the Saviour; that though the Jews had ignorantly crucified this

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xiii. 13, 14.

<sup>2</sup> The Antioch here mentioned is distinguished as the metropolis of Pisidia, to prevent its being confounded with the city of the same name in Syria, where the believers were first called Christians. Pisidia was a province of Asia Minor.—Ed.

just, innocent person, yet that God, according to his own predictions, had raised him up from the dead ; that through him they preached forgiveness of sins, and that by him alone it was that men, if ever, must be justified and acquitted from that guilt and condemnation which all the pompous ceremonies and ministries of the Mosaic law could never do away ; that therefore they should do well to take heed, lest by their opposing this way of salvation, they should bring upon themselves that prophetic curse which God had threatened to the Jews of old, for their great contumacy and neglect. This sermon wanted not its due effects. The proselyte Jews desired the apostles to discourse again to them of this matter the next Sabbath-day ; the apostles also persuading them to continue firm in the belief of these things. The day was no sooner come, but the whole city, almost, flocked to be their auditors ; which when the Jews saw, actuated by a spirit of envy, they began to blaspheme, and to contradict the apostles ; who, nothing daunted, told them, that our Lord had charged them first to preach the gospel to the Jews, which since they so obstinately rejected, they were now to address themselves to the Gentiles ; who hearing this, exceedingly rejoiced at the good news, and magnified the word of God ; and as many of them as were thus prepared and disposed towards eternal life, heartily closed with it and embraced it. The apostles preaching not there only, but through the whole country round about. The Jews, more exasperated than before, resolved to be rid of their company, and to that end persuaded some of the more devout and honourable women to deal with their husbands, persons of prime rank and quality in

the city, by whose means they were driven out of those parts. Whereat St Paul and Barnabas shaking off the dust of their feet, as a testimony against their ingratitude and infidelity, departed from them.

5. The next place they went to was Iconium; where at first they found kind entertainment and good success; God setting a seal to their doctrine by the testimony of his miracles.<sup>1</sup> But here the Jewish malice began again to ferment, exciting the people to sedition, and mutiny against them. In-somuch, that hearing of a design to stone them, they seasonably withdrew to Lystra; where they first made their way by a miraculous cure. For St. Paul seeing an impotent cripple, that had been lame from his mother's womb, cured him with the speaking of a word. The people who beheld the miracle, had so much natural logic as to infer that there was a divinity in the thing; though mistaking the author, they applied it to the instruments, crying out, that the gods in human shape were come down from heaven. Paul, as being chief speaker, they termed Mercury, the god of speech and eloquence; Barnabas, by reason of his age and gravity, they called Jupiter, the father of their gods; accordingly the Syriac interpreter here renders Jupiter, "the Lord, or sovereign of the gods." The fame of this being spread over the city, the priest of Jupiter brought oxen dressed up with garlands, after the Gentile rites, to the house where the apostles were, to do sacrifice to them. Which they no sooner understood, but in detestation of those undue honours offered them; they rent

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xiv. 1.

their clothes, and told them that they were men of the same make and temper, of the same passions and infirmities with themselves; that the design of their preaching was to convert them from these vain idolatries and superstitions to the worship of the true God, the great Parent of the world; who though heretofore he had left men to themselves, to go on in their own ways of idolatrous worship, yet had he given sufficient evidence of himself in the constant returns of a gracious and benign providence, in crowning the year with fruitful seasons, and other acts of common kindness and bounty to mankind.

6. A short discourse; but very rational and convictive, which it may not be amiss a little more particularly to consider, and the method which the apostle uses to convince these blind idolaters. He proves divine honours to be due to God alone, as the sovereign Being of the world; and that there is such a supreme infinite Being he argues from his works both of creation and providence. Creation: "He is the living God that made heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are therein." Providence: "He left not himself without witness,<sup>1</sup> in that he did good, and gave rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness." Than which no argument can be more apt and proper to work upon the minds of men. 'That which may be known of God is manifest to

<sup>1</sup> Καί τοι νῆ τὸν Δία καὶ τὰς Θεὰς, ἐν τῶν γεγονότων ἀπήρκει πρὸς τὸ αἰδεῖσθαι τῆς προνοίας, τῷ γ' εἰδῆμονι καὶ ἐκ εὐχαριστῶ καὶ μὴ τοινῦν τὰ μεγάλα, αὐτὸ τῷτο τὸ ἐκ πόας γάλα γεινᾶσθαι, καὶ ἐκ γάλακτος τυρὸν, καὶ ἐκ δέρματος ἔρια· τίς ἐστιν ὁ πεποιηκὼς ταῦτα, ἢ ἐπινενοηκὼς; ὃ δὲ εἰς φησιν· ὦ μεγάλῃς ἀναισχυντίας, καὶ ἀναισθησίας.—Arrian. Dissert. lib. i. c. 16, p. 126.

the Gentiles, for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, even his eternal power and godhead, are clearly seen and understood by the things that are made.' It being impossible impartially to survey the several parts of the creation, and not see in every place evident footsteps of an infinite wisdom, power, and goodness. Who can look up unto the heavens, and not there discern an Almighty wisdom beautifully garnishing those upper regions, distinguishing the circuits, and perpetuating the motions of the heavenly lights? Placing the sun in the middle of the heavens, that he might equally dispense and communicate his light and heat to all parts of the world, and not burn the earth with the too near approach of his scorching beams: by which means the creatures are refreshed and cheered, the earth impregnated with fruits and flowers by the benign influence of a vital heat; and the vicissitudes and seasons of the year regularly distinguished by their constant and orderly revolutions. Whence are the great orbs of heaven kept in continual motion, always going in the same tract, but because there is a superior power that keeps these great wheels a-going? Who is it 'that poises the balancings of the clouds; that divides a water-course for the overflowing of waters, and a way for the lightning of the thunder?' Who can 'bind the sweet influences of the Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?' Or who can 'bring forth Mazaroth in his season, or guide Arcturus with his sons?' Do these come by chance? Or by the secret appointment of infinite wisdom? Who can consider the admirable thinness and purity of the air; its immediate subserviency to the great ends of the crea-

tion, its being the treasury of vital breath to all living creatures, without which the next moment must put a period to our days, and not reflect upon that Divine wisdom that contrived it? If we come down upon the earth, there we discover a divine Providence, supporting it with the pillars of an invisible power, 'stretching the north over the empty space, and hanging the earth upon nothing;' filling it with great variety of admirable and useful creatures, and maintaining them all according to their kinds at his own cost and charges. It is he that clothes the grass with a delightful verdure; that 'crowns the year with his loving-kindness,' and 'makes the valleys stand thick with corn;' that 'causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man; that he may bring forth food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart;' that beautifies the lilies that neither toil nor spin, and that with a glory that outshines Solomon in all his pomp and grandeur. From land let us ship our observations to sea, and there we may descry the wise effects of infinite understanding: a wide ocean fitly disposed for the mutual commerce and correspondence of one part of mankind with another; filled with great and admirable fishes, and enriched with the treasures of the deep. What but an Almighty arm can shut in the sea with doors, bind it by a perpetual decree that it cannot pass, and tie up its wild raging waves with no stronger cordage than ropes of sand? Who but he commands the storm, and stills the tempest? and brings the mariner, when at his wit's end in the midst of the greatest dangers, to his desired haven? 'They that

go down to the sea in ships, and do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.' So impossible is it for a man to stand in any part of the creation, wherein he may not discern evidences enough of an infinitely wise, gracious, and omnipotent Being. Thus much I thought good to add, to illustrate the apostle's argument; whence he strongly infers, that it is very reasonable that we should worship and adore this great Creator and benefactor, and not transfer the honours due to him alone upon men of frail and sinful passions, and much less upon dumb idols, unable either to make or to help themselves. An argument, which though very plain and plausible, and adapted to the meanest understandings; yet was all little enough to restrain the people from offering sacrifice to them. But how soon was the wind turned into another corner? The old spirit of the Jews did still haunt and pursue them; who coming from Antioch and Iconium, exasperated and stirred up the multitude. And they who just before accounted them as gods, used them now worse, not only than ordinary men, but slaves. For in a mighty rage they fall upon St. Paul, stone him, (as they thought, dead,) and then drag him out of the city: whither the Christians of that place coming, probably to inter him; he suddenly revived, and rose up amongst them, and the next day went thence to Derbe.

7. Here they preached the gospel, and then returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia, confirming the Christians of those places in the belief and profession of Christianity, earnestly persuading them to persevere, and not be discouraged with those troubles and persecutions which they

must expect would attend the profession of the gospel. And that all this might succeed the better, with fasting and prayer they ordained governors and pastors in every church; and having recommended them to the grace of God, departed from them. From hence they passed through Pisidia, and thence came to Pamphylia; and having preached to the people at Perga, they went down to Attalia. And thus, having at this time finished the whole circuit of their ministry, they returned back to Antioch, in Syria, the place whence they had first set out. Here they acquainted the church with the various transactions and successes of their travels, and how great a door had thereby been opened to the conversion of the Gentile world.

8. While St. Paul staid at Antioch, there arose that famous controversy about the observation of the Mosaic rites,<sup>1</sup> set on foot and brought in by some Jewish converts that came down thither, whereby great disturbances and distractions were made in the minds of the people. For the composing whereof, the church of Antioch resolved to send Paul and Barnabas to consult with the apostles and church at Jerusalem. In their way thither, they declared to the brethren, as they went along, what success they had had in the conversion of the Gentiles. Being come to Jerusalem, they first addressed themselves to Peter, James, and John, the pillars and principal persons in that place; by whom they were kindly entertained, and admitted to the 'right hand of fellowship.' And perceiving by the account which St. Paul gave them, that the 'gospel of the uncircumcision was

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xv. 1.



committed' to him, as that of the 'circumcision' was to Peter; they ratified it by compact and agreement, that Peter should preach to the Jews, and Paul to the Gentiles. Hereupon a council was summoned, wherein Peter having declared his sense of things, Paul and Barnabas acquainted them what great things God by their ministry had done among the Gentiles. A plain evidence, that, though uncircumcised, they were accepted by God as well as the Jews with all their legal rites and privileges. The issue of the debate was, that the Gentiles were not under the obligation of the law of Moses; and that therefore some persons of their own should be joined with Paul and Barnabas, to carry the canons and decrees of the council down to Antioch, for their fuller satisfaction in this matter. But of this affair we shall give the reader a more distinct and particular account in another place.

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### SECTION III.

*Of St. Paul, from the time of the Synod at Jerusalem, till his departure from Athens.*

SAINT Paul and his companions having received the decretal epistle, returned to Antioch; where they had not been long before Peter came thither to them; and according to the decree of the council, freely and inoffensively conversed with the Gentiles; till some of the Jews coming down thither from Jerusalem, he withdrew his converse, as if it

were a thing unwarrantable and unlawful. By which means the minds of many were dissatisfied, and their consciences very much ensnared. Whereat St. Paul being exceedingly troubled, publicly rebuked him for it, and that, as the case required, with great sharpness and severity. It was not long after, that St. Paul and Barnabas resolved upon visiting the churches, which they had lately planted among the Gentiles.<sup>4</sup> To which end Barnabas determined to take his cousin Mark along with them. This Paul would by no means agree to, he having deserted them in their former journey. A little spark, which yet kindled a great feud and dissension between these two good men, and arose to that height, that in some discontent they parted from each other. So natural is it for the best of men sometimes to indulge an unwarrantable passion, and so far to espouse the interest of a private and particular humour, or rather to hazard the great law of charity, and violate the bands of friendship, than to recede from it.<sup>5</sup> The effect was, Barnabas, taking his nephew, went for Cyprus, his native

<sup>4</sup> Acts, xv. 3.

<sup>5</sup> There does not appear to be sufficient ground for the notion which our author has here espoused, that the difference between Paul and Barnabas partook of the nature of 'an unwarrantable passion.' The arguments for and against taking Mark as a companion in their journey, might be urged with great zeal and earnestness, and yet leave their minds quite free from the leaven of malice. Surely it may be believed that the spirit and grace of God had sufficient power over the hearts of his chosen ministers, to prevent their falling into so fearful a sin as that of wrath. But if the Greek phrase, *εγενετο ουν παροξυσμος*, "there was, therefore, a paroxysm," must be taken as implying anger against each other, the fault, it has been observed, is to be chiefly ascribed to Barnabas, who manifested too great a partiality for his relative; Paul only contending for the interests of their mission.—ED.

country. St. Paul made choice of Silas ; and the success of his undertaking being first recommended to the divine care and goodness, they set forwards on their journey.

2. Their first passage was into Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches as they went along. And to that end they left with them copies of the synodical decrees, lately ordained in the council at Jerusalem. Hence we may suppose it was that he set sail for Crete, where he preached and propagated Christianity, and constituted Titus to be the first bishop and pastor of that island, whom he left there, to settle and dispose those affairs, which the shortness of his own stay in those parts would not suffer him to do. Hence he returned back unto Cilicia, and came to Lystra, where he found Timothy, whose father was a Greek, his mother a Jewish convert, by whom he had been brought up under all the advantages of a pious and religious education, and especially an incomparable skill and dexterity in the holy Scriptures. St. Paul designed him for the companion of his travels, and a special instrument in the ministry of the gospel ; and knowing that his being uncircumcised would be a mighty prejudice in the opinion and estimation of the Jews, caused him to be circumcised ; being willing, in all lawful and indifferent matters, (such was circumcision now become,) to accommodate himself to men's humours and apprehensions for the saving of their souls.

3. From hence with his company he passed through Phrygia, and the country of Galatia,<sup>1</sup> where he was entertained by them with as mighty a

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xvi. 6.

kindness and veneration as if he had been an angel immediately sent from heaven. And being by revelation forbidden to go into Asia, by a second vision he was commanded to direct his journey to Macedonia. And here it was that St. Luke joined himself to his company, and became ever after his inseparable companion. Sailing from Troas, they arrived at the island Samothracia, and thence to Neapolis; from whence they went to Philippi, the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a Roman colony; where he stayed some considerable time to plant the Christian faith, and where his ministry had more particular success on Lydia, a purple-seller, born at Thyatira, baptized together with her whole family; and with her the apostle sojourned during his residence in that place. A little without this city there was a *proseucha*, (an oratory, or house of prayer,) whereto the apostle and his company used frequently to retire, for the exercise of their religion, and for preaching the gospel to those that resorted thither. The Jews had three sorts of places for their public worship; the temple at Jerusalem, which was like the cathedral, or mother-church, where all sacrifices and oblations were offered, and where all males were bound, three times a year, personally to pay their devotions; their synagogue, (many whereof they had almost in every place, not unlike our parochial churches,) where the Scriptures were read and expounded, and the people taught their duty. ‘Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day.’<sup>1</sup> And then they had their *proseuchæ*, (τὰ κατὰ πόλεις προ-

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xv. 21.

σενκτήρια, as Philo sometimes calls them,<sup>1</sup>) or oratories, which were like chapels of ease to the temple and synagogues, whither the people were wont to come solemnly to offer up their prayers to heaven. They were built (as Epiphanius informs us,<sup>2</sup>) ἔξω τῆς πόλεως, ἐν ἀέρι καὶ ἀκάλυπτον τόπων, without the city, in the open air, and uncovered; τόποι πλατεῖς φόρων δίκην, προσευχὰς ταύτας ἐκάλουν; being large, spacious places, after the manner of *fora*, or market-places, and these they called *proseuchas*. And that the Jews and Samaritans had such places of devotion, he proves from this very place at Philippi, where St. Paul preached. For they had them not in Judæa only, but even at Rome itself,<sup>3</sup> where Tiberius (as Philo tells Caius the emperor<sup>4</sup>) suffered the Jews to inhabit the trans-tiberine region, and undisturbedly to live according to the rites of their institutions: καὶ προσευχὰς ἔχειν, καὶ συνιέναι εἰς αὐτάς, καὶ μάλιστα ἐν ταῖς ἱεραῖς, ἐξδόμας, ὅτε δημοσίᾳ τῷ πατριῶν παιδεύονται φιλοσοφίαν, and also to have their *proseuchas*, and to meet in them, especially upon their holy sabbaths, that they might be familiarly instructed in the laws and religion of their country. Such they had also in other places, especially where they had not, or were not suffered to have synagogues for their public worship. But to return.

4. As they were going to this oratory, they were often followed by a Pythoness, a maid-servant, acted by a spirit of divination, who openly cried

<sup>1</sup> De Vit. Mos. lib. iii. p. 685.

<sup>2</sup> Adv. Massal. Hæres. lxxx. p. 850.

<sup>3</sup> "In qua te quæro proseucha?"—Juv. Sat. 3, v. 296.

"Proseucha] Locus Judæorum, ubi orant."—Vet. Schol. ibid.

<sup>4</sup> De Legat. ad Caium, p. 1014.

out, that "these men were the servants of the most high God, who came to show the way of salvation to the world;" so easily can heaven extort a testimony from the mouth of hell. But St. Paul, to show how little he needed Satan to be his witness, commanded the demon to come out, which immediately left her. The evil spirit thus thrown out of possession, presently raised a storm against the apostles; for the masters of the damsel, who used by her diabolical arts to raise great advantages to themselves, being sensible that now their gainful trade was spoiled, resolved to be revenged on them that had spoiled it. Accordingly they laid hold upon them, and dragged them before the seat of judicature, insinuating to the governors that these men were Jews, and sought to introduce different customs and ways of worship, contrary to the laws of the Roman empire. The magistrates and people were soon agreed, the one to give sentence, the other to set upon the execution. In fine, they were stript, beaten, and then commanded to be thrown into prison, and the gaoler charged to keep them with all possible care and strictness: who to make sure of his charge, thrust them into the inner dungeon, and made their feet fast in the stocks. But a good man can turn a prison into a chapel, and make a den of thieves to be a house of prayer. Our feet cannot be bound so fast to the earth but that still our hearts may mount up to heaven. At midnight the apostles were overheard by their fellow-prisoners, praying, and singing hymns to God. But after the still voice came the tempest. An earthquake suddenly shook the foundations of the prison, the doors flew open, and their chains fell off. The gaoler awaking with

this amazing accident, concluded with himself that the prisoners were fled;<sup>1</sup> and to prevent the sentence of public justice, was going to lay violent hands upon himself; which St. Paul espying, called out to him to hold his hand, and told him they were all there. Who thereupon came in to them with a greater earthquake in his own conscience, and falling down before them, asked them, 'What he should do to be saved?' They told him, there was no other way of salvation for him or his, than a hearty and sincere embracing of the faith of Christ. What a happy change does Christianity make in the minds of men! How plain does it smooth the roughest tempers, and instil the sweetest principles of civility and good-nature! He who a little before had tyrannized over the apostles with the most merciless and cruel usage, began now to treat them with all the arts of kindness and charity; bringing them out of the dungeon, and washing their stripes and wounds, and being more fully instructed in the principles of Christianity, was, together with his whole family, immediately baptized by them. Early in the morning the magistrates sent officers privately to release them; which the apostles refused, telling them, that they were not only innocent persons, but Romans; that they had been illegally condemned and beaten; that therefore their delivery should be as public as the injury, and an open vindication of their innocence; and that they themselves, who had sent them thither, should fetch them thence. For the Roman government was very tender of the

<sup>1</sup> "Milites, si amiserint custodias, ipsi in periculum deducuntur."—L. 12. ff. de custod. et exhib. reor. tit. 3.

lives and liberties of its own subjects, those especially that were free denizens of Rome; every injury offered to a Roman being looked upon as an affront against the majesty of the whole people of Rome.<sup>1</sup> Such a one might not be beaten: but to be scourged or bound, without being first legally heard and tried, was not only against the Roman, but the laws of all other nations:<sup>2</sup> and the more public any injury was, the greater was its aggravation; and the laws required a more strict and solemn reparation. St. Paul, who was a Roman, and very well understood the laws and privileges of Rome, insisted upon this, to the great startling and affrighting of the magistrates; who sensible of their error, came to the prison, and entreated them to depart. Whereupon going to Lydia's house, and having saluted and encouraged the brethren, they departed from that place.

5. Leaving Philippi, they came next to Thessalonica, the metropolis of Macedonia, where Paul, according to his custom, presently went to the Jewish synagogue, for three sabbath-days, reasoning and disputing with them;<sup>3</sup> proving from the

<sup>1</sup> "Ista laus primum majorum nostrorum, Quirites, qui lenitate legum vestram libertatem munitam esse voluerunt. Quamobrem inviolatum corpus omnium civium Romanorum integrum libertatis defendo servari opertere. Porcia lex virgas ab omnium civium Rom. corpore amovit. C. Gracchus legem tulit, ne de capite civium Rom. injussu vestro judicaretur."—Cic. Oratio pro C. Rabir. p. 314, tom. ii.

<sup>2</sup> L. 7, ff. de injuriis, lib. lxxix. tit. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Paul, by thus carefully avoiding giving the Jews cause of complaint against him, both acted in conformity with the spirit of our Lord's directions, and greatly furthered the object of his ministry. Had he been less wise, or less holy; had he been an impostor, or a fanatic, he would not have thus sought to diffuse the knowledge he had to impart through the acknowledged and



predictions of the Old Testament, that the Messiah was to suffer, and to rise again; and that the blessed Jesus was this Messiah. Great numbers, especially of religious proselytes, were converted by his preaching; while, like the sun which melts wax but hardens clay, it wrought quite a contrary effect in the unbelieving Jews, who presently set themselves to blow up the city into a tumult and an uproar, and missing St. Paul, (who had withdrawn himself,) they fell foul upon Jason, in whose house he lodged, representing to the magistrates that they were enemies to Cæsar, and sought to undermine the peace and prosperity of the Roman empire. At night Paul and Silas were conducted by the brethren to Berœa; where going to the synagogue, they found the people of a more noble and generous, a more pliable and ingenuous temper, ready to entertain the Christian doctrine, but yet not willing to take it merely upon the apostle's word, till they had first compared his preaching with what the scriptures say of the Messiah and his doctrine, And the success was answerable in those great numbers that came over to them. But the Jewish malice pursued them still; for hearing at Thessalonica what entertainment they had found in this place, they presently came down to exasperate and stir up the people; to avoid which, St. Paul, leaving Silas and Timothy behind him, thought good to withdraw himself from that place.

6. From Berœa he went to Athens,<sup>1</sup> one of the

legal channels of communication, but would have published at once, and with every species of popular art, his notions to the Gentiles.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xvii. 15.

most renowned cities in the world, excelling all others (says an ancient historian<sup>1</sup>) in antiquity, humanity, and learning. Indeed it was the great seat of arts and learning; and as Cicero<sup>2</sup> will have it, the fountain whence civility, learning, religion, arts, and laws, were derived into all other nations. So universally flocked to by all that had but the least kindness for the muses, or good manners, that he who had not seen Athens was accounted a block; he who having seen it was not in love with it, a dull, stupid ass; and he who after he had seen it could be willing to leave it, fit for nothing to be but a pack-horse.<sup>3</sup> Here among the several sects of philosophers, he had more particular contests with the Stoics and Epicureans, who beyond all the rest, seemed enemies to Christianity. The Epicureans, because they found their pleasure and jovial humour, and their loose and exorbitant course of life so much checked and controlled by the strict and severe precepts of Christ; and that Christianity so plainly and positively asserted a divine providence, that governs the world, and that will adjudge to men suitable rewards and punishments in another world. The Stoics, on the other hand, though pretending to principles of great and uncommon rigour and severity, and such as had nearest affinity to the doctrines of the Christian religion, yet found themselves aggrieved with it. That meek and humble temper of mind, that

<sup>1</sup> Cornel. Nep. in Vit. Attic. c. 3, p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Orat. pro Flacc. tom. ii.

<sup>3</sup> *Εἰ μὴ τεθέσται τὰς Ἀθήνας, τίλεχος εἴ.*

*Εἰ δὲ τεθέσται, μὴ τεθήρευσαι δέ, ὄνος.*

*Εἰ δέ' εὐαρετῶν ἀποτρέχεις, κανθήλιον.*

Lysipp. comic. apud Dicæarch. de vit. Græc. à Steph. edit. cap. 3, p. 18.

modesty and self-denial, which the gospel so earnestly recommends to us, and so strictly requires of us, being so directly contrary to the immoderate pride and ambition of that sect, who beyond all proportions of reason, were not ashamed to make their wise men equal to, and in some things to exceed God himself.<sup>1</sup>

7. While St. Paul staid at Athens, in expectation of Silas and Timothy to come to him, he went up and down to take a more curious view and survey of the city, which he found miserably overgrown with superstition and idolatry; as indeed Athens was noted by all their own writers for far greater numbers of deities and idols than all Greece besides.<sup>2</sup> They were ὥσπερ περὶ τὰ ἄλλα φιλοξενῶντες, ἔγω κ' περὶ τὰς Θεάς· πολλὰ γάρ τῶν ξενικῶν ἱερῶν παρέδεδξαντο as Strabo notes; <sup>3</sup> not more fond of strangers and novelties in other things, than forward to comply with novelties in religion;

<sup>1</sup> "Tantum sapienti sua quantum deo omnis ætas patet. Est aliquid quo sapiens antecedit Deum. Ille naturæ beneficio non timet, suo sapiens. Ecce res magna, habere imbecillitatem hominis, securitatem Dei."—Senec. Epist. 53, p. 131. "Solebat Sextius dicere, Jovem plus non posse, quam bonum virum. Plura Jupiter habet, quæ præstat hominibus: sed inter duos bonos non est melior, qui locupletior. Jupiter quo antecedit virum bonum? diutius bonus est. Sapiens nihilo se minoris æstimat, quod virtutes ejus spatio breviori clauduntur."—Id: Epist. 37, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Δέλεκται δέ μοι κ' πρότερον ὡς Ἀθηναίοις περισσότερόν τι ἢ τοῖς ἄλλοις εἰς τὰ θεῖα ἐστὶ σπουδῆς.—Pausan. lib. i. p. 42. Τέτως δέ ἐ τὰ εἰς φιλανθρωπίαν μόνον καθέστηκεν, ἀλλὰ κ' εἰς Θεὸς ἐνσεβεῖν ἄλλων πλείον.—Id.

Θεοὶ ξενικοὶ παρὰ Ἀθηναίοις τιμῶνται, ἅς καταλέγει Ἀπολλοφάνης ἐν Κρησί.—Hesych. in voc. Θεοί. p. 438.

αἰεὶ δὲ θεορρήτων περὶ μύθων

Ἀτθίδος ἀρχαίης φιλοπευθέες εἰσὶ πολῖται.

Nonn. Dionys. lib. xxxviii. 542.

<sup>3</sup> Geograph. p. 325.

ready to entertain any foreign deities and rites of worship; no divinity that was elsewhere adored coming amiss to them. Whence Athens is by one of their own orators styled, τὸ μέγιστον τῆς ἐνσε-  
 ξείας κεφάλαιον, "the great sum and centre of piety and religion."<sup>1</sup> And he there aggravates the impiety of Epicurus, in speaking unworthily and irreverently of the gods, from the place where he did it; at Athens, a place so pious, so devoted to them. Indeed herein justly commendable, that they could not brook the least dishonourable reflection upon any deity, and therefore Apollonius Tyaneus<sup>2</sup> tells Timasion, that the safest way was

<sup>1</sup> Himer. Orat. in Epicur. ap. Phot. cod 243, col. 1086.

<sup>2</sup> But this Appollonius, so celebrated in his times for the success with which he practised the arts of magic that he was set up by the pagans as the rival of Christ, has been shown to have clearly professed his belief in one mighty and mysterious Being, who created all things. The contradiction which existed between this notion, and that of the sentiment above stated, was only an apparent contradiction in the theology of the period, and was supposed to be fully explained by the reasonings of the philosophers. "The truth of this whole business," observes the venerable Cudworth, "seems to be this: that the ancient pagans did physiologize in their theology; and whether looking upon the whole world animated, as the supreme God, and consequently the several parts of it as his living members; or else, apprehending it at least to be a mirror or visible image of the invisible Deity, and consequently all its several parts and things of nature but so many several manifestations of the Divine power and providence: they pretended that all their devotion towards the Deity ought not to be huddled up in one general and confused acknowledgment of a supreme invisible Being, the creator and governor of all; but that all the several manifestations of the Deity in the world, considered singly and apart by themselves, should be made so many distinct objects of their devout veneration."—Intellectual System, Book I. chap. iv. p. 228, ed. 1743. The awful corruption which followed in the train of every mythological invention, proves the perfect falseness of this philosophic theory; the grand error of which seems to have been, that it confounded the *will* of Deity

to speak well of all the gods; and especially at Athens, where altars were dedicated even to unknown gods.<sup>1</sup> And so St. Paul here found it, for among the several shrines and places of worship and devotion, he took more particular notice of one altar inscribed to the unknown God. The entire inscription, whereof the apostle quotes only part of the last words, is thought to have been this:

ΘΕΟΙΣ ΑΣΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΡΩΠΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΒΥΗΣ· ΘΕΩ.  
ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ· ΚΑΙ ΞΕΝΩ.

"TO THE GODS OF ASIA, EUROPE, AND AFRICA;  
TO THE STRANGE AND UNKNOWN GOD."<sup>2</sup>

St. Jerome<sup>3</sup> represents it in the same manner, only makes it gods, in the plural number; which, because, says he, St. Paul needed not, he only cited it in the singular.<sup>4</sup> Which surely he affirms without any just ground and warrant; though it cannot be denied, but that heathen writers make frequent mention of the altars of unknown gods that were at Athens, as there want not others who speak of some erected there to an unknown god. This no-

with the operations carried on by its energy; for each of the gods being evidently regarded as possessing a distinct personality, must also have been considered to possess a distinct will; distinct in itself, however subjected occasionally to the greater power of the higher god or gods. From this variety of wills, existing in the variously exhibited and divided godhead, arose, we apprehend, all that confusion of principles, that dark cloud of enormous vice, which overspread the whole heathen world.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Philostor. de vit. Appollon. lib. vi. cap. 2, p. 262, et ex eo, Suid. in voc. *Τιμαρίων*.

<sup>2</sup> Oecumen. Schol. in Act. 17, p. 137.

<sup>3</sup> Com. in Tit. cap. 1, ad Paul. et Eustoch. p. 248, tom. ix.

<sup>4</sup> It is supposed by some learned authors that the plural might be used, not to express that there were altars to many unknown gods, but that there were many altars to the one.—ED.

tion the Athenians might probably borrow from the Hebrews, who had the name of God in great secrecy and veneration. This being one of the titles given him by the prophet  $\text{לֵךְ אֱלֹהִים}$ , 'a hidden God,'<sup>1</sup> or a God that hides himself.' Sure I am, that Justin Martyr<sup>2</sup> tells us, that one of the principal names given to God by some of the heathens, was  $\text{Πάγκρυφος}$ , 'one altogether hidden.' Hence, the Egyptians<sup>4</sup> probably derived their great God Ammon, or more truly Amun, which signifies 'occult,' or 'hidden.' Accordingly, in this passage of St. Paul, the Syriac interpreter renders it, the 'altar of the hidden God.' The Jews were infinitely superstitious in concealing the name of God, not thinking it lawful ordinarily to pronounce it. This made the Gentiles, strangers at best both to the language and religion of the Jews, at a great loss by what name to call him; one styling him in general an 'uncertain, unspeakable, invisible deity;' whence Caligula,<sup>4</sup> in his ranting oration to the Jews, told them, that wretches as they were, though they refused to own him, whom all others had confessed to be a deity, yet they could worship  $\text{τὸν ἀκατανόμαστον ὑμῖν}$ , 'their own

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah, xlv. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Paræn. ad Græc. p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> "Ἐστὶ δὲ τῶν πολλῶν νομιζόντων ἴδιον παρ' Αἰγυπτίους ὄνομα τῷ Διὶ τὸν Ἀμῦν (ὃν παράγοντες ἡμεῖς Ἀμμωνα λέγομεν) Μανεῶς μὲν ὁ Σεβεννίτης τὸν κεκρυμμένον οἶεται, αἱ τὴν κρύψιν ὑπὸ ταύτης δηλῆσθαι τῆς φωνῆς.—Plutarch. lib. de Isid. et Osir. 354.

———"dedita sacris Incerti Judæa Dei."—Lucan. Pharsal. lib. ii. incertum Mosis numen. Trebel. Poll. in vit. Claud. c. 2, p. 800.

"Judæi mente solâ, unumque numen intelligunt; summum illud et æternum, neque mutabile, neque interitum."—Tacit. Histor. lib. v. c. 5, p. 535.

<sup>4</sup> Phil. de legat. ad Cai. p. 1041.

nameless God.' And hence, the Gentiles derived their custom of keeping secret the name of their gods; thus Plutarch<sup>1</sup> tells us of the tutelar deity of Rome, that it was not lawful to name it, or so much as to inquire what sex it was of, whether god or goddess; and that for once revealing it, Valerius Soranus, though tribune of the people, came to an untimely end, and was crucified; the vilest and most dishonourable kind of death. Whereof, among other reasons, he assigns this, that by concealing the author of their public safety, μή μόνον τῆτον, ἀλλὰ πάντας ὑπὸ τῶν πολιτῶν τὰς θεὰς τιμᾶσθαι, not he only, but all the other gods might have due honour and worship paid to them. Hence, in their public adorations, after the invocation of particular deities, they were wont to add some more general and comprehensive form, as when Cicero had been making his address to most of their particular gods, he concludes with a '*Cæteros item Deos, Deasque omnes imploro atque obtestor.*'<sup>2</sup> Usually the form was 'DII DEÆQUE OMNES.' The reason whereof was this, that not being assured many times what that peculiar deity was, that was proper to their purpose, or what numbers of gods there were in the world, they would not affront or offend any, by seeming to neglect and pass them by. And this Chrysostom<sup>3</sup> thinks to have been particularly

<sup>1</sup> Quæst. Rom. p. 279, vid. Serv. ad illud Virgilii Georgic. lib. i. "Dii patrii indigites," &c.

<sup>2</sup> In Verr. Actio. 7, p. 223. "Post specialem invocationem, transit ad generalitatem, ne quod numen prætereat, more pontificum per quos ritu veteri in omnibus sacris, post speciales Deos, quos ad ipsum sacrum, quod fiebat, necesse erat invocari, generaliter omnia numina invocabantur."—Serv. in illud Virgil. Georg. lib. i. Diique Deæque omnes.

<sup>3</sup> Homil. xxxviii. in Act. p. 705.

designed in the erection of this Athenian altar, μήποτε καὶ ἄλλος τις ἢ αὐτοῖς μὲν ἐδέπω γνώριμος, θεραπευόμενος δε ἄλλαχῶ they were afraid lest there might be some other deity (besides those whom they particularly worshipped) as yet unknown to them, though honoured and adored elsewhere; and therefore ὑπὲρ πλείονος ἀσφαλείας, 'for the more security,' they dedicated an altar to the unknown god. As for the particular occasion of erecting these altars at Athens, (omitting that of Pan's appearing to Philpides, mentioned by Oecumenius,) the most probable seems to be this. When a great plague raged at Athens,<sup>1</sup> and several means had been attempted for the removal of it, they were advised by Epimenides the philosopher, to build an altar, and dedicate it τῷ προσήκοντι θεῷ, 'to the proper and peculiar deity to whom it did appertain,' be he what he would. A course which, proving successful, no doubt gave occasion to them, by way of gratitude, to erect more shrines to this unknown God. And accordingly Laertius, who lived long after St. Paul's time, tells us that there were such nameless altars (he means such as were not inscribed to any particular deity) in and about Athens in his days, as monuments of that eminent deliverance.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Laert. lib. i. in vit. Epimen. p. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Cudworth (Intellect. Sys. b. l. c. 4,) quotes from Lucian's Dialogue, Philopatzs, to illustrate this point, the expression of Critias: Νῆ τὸν ἄγνωστον ἐν Ἀθήναις. "No, by the unknown god of Athens;" and this of Triephton: Ἡμεῖς δὲ τὸν ἐν Ἀθήναις ἄγνωστον εὑρεόντες ἐπροσκυνήσαντες, χεῖρας εἰς ἑρανὸν ἐκτείναντες, τούτῳ ευχαριστήσομεν, ὡς ταταξιωθέντες, &c. "But we, having found out that unknown god at Athens, and worshipped him with hands stretched up to heaven, will give thanks to him, as having been thought worthy to be made subject to this power."—ED.



7. But whatever the particular cause might be, hence it was that St. Paul took occasion to discourse of the true, but to them unknown God. For the philosophers had before treated him with a great deal of scorn and derision, asking what that idle and prating fellow had to say to them? Others looking upon him as a propagator of new and strange gods, because he preached to them Jesus and the anastasis, or resurrection, which they looked upon as two upstart deities, lately come into the world. Hereupon they brought him to the place where stood the famous senate-house of the Areopagites; and according to the Athenian humour, which altogether delighted in curious novelties, running up and down the forum and places of public concourse to see any strange accident, or hear any new report, (a vice which their own great orator<sup>1</sup> long since taxed them with,) they asked him, what that new and strange doctrine was which he preached to them? Whereupon, in a neat and elegant discourse he began to tell them, he had observed how much they were overrun with superstition;<sup>2</sup> that their zeal for religion was indeed generous and commendable, but which miserably over-shot its due measures and proportions; that he had taken notice of an altar among them inscribed, to the unknown God; and therefore, in compassion to their blind and misguided zeal, he would declare unto them the Deity which they ignorantly worshipped;

<sup>1</sup> Τοσῶτον χρόνον σπνδαζετε, ὅσον ἂν καθῆσθε, ἀκούοντες ἢν προσαγγέλῃ τι νεώτερον.—Demosth. Philip. 4, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> The word Δεισιδαιμών, here translated superstition, was used by the apostle in its best, or mildest sense; in which manner it is found employed by many heathen authors. Com. in Act. Apos. Poli. Synopsis. i. h. l.—Ed.

and this was no other than the great God, the creator of all things, the supreme governor and ruler of the world, who was incapable of being confined within any temple or human fabric; that no image could be made as a proper instrument to represent him; that he needed no gifts or sacrifices, being himself the fountain, from whence life, breath, and all other blessings were derived to particular beings: that from one common original he had made the whole race of mankind; and had wisely fixed and determined the times and bounds of their habitation; and all to this end, that men might be the stronglier obliged to seek after him, and sincerely to serve and worship him. A duty which they might easily attain to, (though otherwise sunk into the deepest degeneracy, and overspread with the grossest darkness,) he every where affording such palpable evidences of his own being and providence, that he seemed to stand near and touch us; it being entirely from him that we derive our life, motion, and subsistence. A thing acknowledged even by their own poet,<sup>1</sup> that 'we also are his offspring.' If, therefore, God was our creator, it was highly unreasonable to think that we could make any image or representation of him: that it was too long already, that the divine patience had borne with the manners of men, and suffered them to go on in their blind idolatries; that now he expected a general repentance and reformation

<sup>1</sup> ———— πάντη δε Διὸς κεκρήμεθα πάντες.  
 ΤΟΥ ΓΑΡ ΚΑΙ ΓΕΝΟΣ ΕΣΜΕΝ. ὁ δ' ἥπιος  
 Δείξια σημαίνει.—Arat. Phæn. in prin. ἀνθρώποισι. πρὸς τὸ  
 πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε εἰ γὰρ αὐτὸς ταῦτα ἐδημιούργησε  
 πρὸς τὸ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις βιοφελές, αὐτῷ δὲ κληθείμεν, αὐτὸν  
 πατέρα ἔδημιουργόν ἐπιγραφόμενοι.—Schol. ibid.

from the world, especially having, by the publishing of his gospel, put out of all dispute the case of a future judgment, and particularly appointed the Holy Jesus to be the person that should sentence and judge the world: by whose resurrection he had given sufficient evidence and assurance of it. No sooner had he mentioned the resurrection, but some of the philosophers (no doubt Epicureans, who were wont to laugh at the notion of a future state) mocked and derided him; others more gravely answered, that they would hear him again concerning this matter. But his discourse, however scorned and slighted, did not wholly want its desired effect, and that upon some of the greatest quality and rank among them. In the number of whom was Dionysius, one of the grave senators and judges of the Areopagus; and Damaris, whom the ancients not improbably make his wife.

8. This Dionysius was bred at Athens, in all the learned arts and sciences: at five-and-twenty years of age he is said to have travelled into Egypt, to perfect himself in the study of astrology; for which that nation had the credit and renown. Here beholding the miraculous eclipse that was at the time of our Saviour's passion,<sup>1</sup> he concluded that some great accident must needs be coming upon the world. Returning to Athens, he became one of the senators of the Areopagus, disputed with St. Paul, and was by him converted from his errors and idolatry; and being thoroughly instructed, was by him (as the ancients inform us<sup>2</sup>) made the first bishop

<sup>1</sup> Chrysost. de Sacerdot. lib. iv. c. 7, p. 67, T. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Vid. inter alios Suid. in voc. Διονύσιος.

<sup>3</sup> Dionys. Corinth. Episc. ap. Euseb. lib. iii. c. 4, p. 74; lib. iv. c. 22, p. 144.

of Athens. As for those that tell us,<sup>1</sup> that he went afterwards into France, by the direction of Clemens of Rome, planted Christianity at, and became bishop of Paris; of his suffering martyrdom there under Domitian, his carrying his head for the space of two miles in his hand, after it had been cut off, and the rest of his miracles done before and after his death, I have as little leisure to inquire into them as I have faith to believe them. Indeed, the foundation of all is justly denied; viz., that ever he was there, a thing never heard of till the times of Charles the Great; though since that, volumes have been written of this controversy, both heretofore and of later times; among which, J. Sirmondus, the Jesuit, and Monsieur Launoy, one of the learned doctors of the Sorbon, have unanswerably proved the Athenian and Parisinian Dionysius to be distinct persons. For the books that go under his name, M. Daille has sufficiently evinced them to be of a date many hundred years younger than St. Denys;<sup>2</sup> though I doubt not but they may claim a greater antiquity than what he allows them. But whoever was their author, I am sure Suidas has overstretched the praise of them beyond all proportion, when he gives them this character, εἰ τις ἀπίδοι πρὸς τὰ κάλλη τῶν αὐτῶν λόγων, καὶ τὰ βάρη

<sup>1</sup> Martyrium S. Dionys. per S. Metaph. ap. Sur. ad diem 9. Octob. Epist. Hilduin. Abb et Hincm. Rhem. item passio ejus aliæque ibid. Niceph. lib. ii. c. 20, p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Dupin has entered at full into the examination of these supposed works of Dionysius the Areopagite; and concludes that they were most probably forged towards the close of the fifth, or at the beginning of the sixth century; that it is certain they were written since the fourth century, and before the middle of the sixth; while the intentional forgery is made plain by the author's evidently affecting to have lived in the apostolic age. Biblioth. Pat. vol. i. p. 36.—ED.

τῶν νοημάτων, ἐκ ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ταῦτα νομίσαι γεννήματα, ἀλλὰ τινος ἀκηράτου καὶ θείας δυνάμεως, that whoever considers the elegance of his discourses, and the profoundness of his notions and speculations, must needs conclude that they are not the issue of any human understanding, but of some divine and immaterial power. But to return to our apostle.

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## SECTION IV.

### *Of St. Paul's acts at Corinth and Ephesus.*

AFTER his departure from Athens,<sup>1</sup> he went to Corinth, the metropolis of Greece, and the residence of the proconsul of Achaia; where he found Aquila and Priscilla lately come from Italy, banished out of Rome by the decree of Claudius; and they being of the same trade and profession wherein he had been educated in his youth, he wrought together with them, lest he should be unnecessarily burthensome unto any, which for the same reason he did in some other places. Hither, after some time, Silas and Timothy came to him. In the synagogue he frequently disputed with the Jews and proselytes, reasoning and proving, that Jesus was the true Messiah. They, according to the nature of the men, made head and opposed him; and what they could not conquer by argument and force of reason, they endeavoured to carry by noise and clamour, mixed

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xviii. 1.

with blasphemies and revilings, the last refuges of an impotent and baffled cause. Whereat to testify his resentment, he shook his garments and told them, since he saw them resolved to pull down vengeance and destruction upon their own heads, he for his part was guiltless and innocent, and would henceforth address himself unto the Gentiles. Accordingly he left them, and went into the house of Justus, a religious proselyte, where, by his preaching and the many miracles which he wrought, he converted great numbers to the faith. Amongst which were Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, Gaius and Stephanus, who, together with their families, embraced the doctrine of the gospel, and were baptized into the Christian faith. But the constant returns of malice and ingratitude are enough to tire the largest charity, and cool the most generous resolution. Therefore, that the apostle might not be discouraged by the restless attempts and machinations of his enemies, our Lord appeared to him in a vision, told him that notwithstanding the bad success he had hitherto met with, there was a great harvest to be gathered in that place; that he should not be afraid of his enemies, but go on to preach confidently and securely, for that he himself would stand by him and preserve him.

2. About this time,<sup>1</sup> as is most probable, he wrote his first epistle to the Thessalonians; Silas and Timothy being lately returned from thence, and having done the message for which he had sent them thither. The main design of the epistle is

<sup>1</sup> That is, at the close of the year 51, or the beginning of the following year.—ED.

to confirm them in the belief of the Christian religion, and that they would persevere in it, notwithstanding all the afflictions and persecutions which he had told them would ensue upon their profession of the gospel, and to instruct them in the main duties of a Christian and religious life. While the apostle was thus employed, the malice of the Jews was no less at work against him ; and universally combining together, they brought him before Gallio, the proconsul of the province, elder brother to the famous Seneca : before him they accused the apostle as an innovator in religion, that sought to introduce a new way of worship, contrary to what was established by the Jewish law, and permitted by the Roman powers. The apostle was ready to have pleaded his own cause, but the proconsul told them, that had it been a matter of right or wrong, that had fallen under the cognizance of the civil judicature, it had been very fit and reasonable that he should have heard and determined the case ; but since the controversy was only concerning the punctilios and niceties of their religion, it was very improper for him to be a judge in such matters. And when they still clamoured about it, he threw out their indictment, and commanded his officers to drive them out of court. Whereupon some of the townsmen seized upon Sosthenes, one of the rulers of the Jewish consistory, a man active and busy in this insurrection, and beat him even before the court of judicature, the proconsul not at all concerning himself about it. A year and a half St. Paul continued in this place, and before his departure thence, wrote his second epistle to the Thessalonians, to supply the want of his coming to them, which in his former

he had resolved on, and for which, in a manner, he had engaged his promise. In this, therefore, he endeavours again to confirm their minds in the truth of the gospel, and that they would not be shaken with those troubles which the wicked unbelieving Jews would not cease to create them; a lost and undone race of men, and whom the divine vengeance was ready finally to overtake. And because some passages in his former letter, relating to this destruction, had been misunderstood, as if this day of the Lord were just then at hand, he rectifies those mistakes, and shows what must precede our Lord's coming unto judgment.

3. St. Paul having thus fully planted and cultivated the church at Corinth, resolved now for Syria.<sup>1</sup> And taking along with him Aquila and Priscilla, at Cenchrea, the port and harbour of Corinth, Aquila (for of him it is certainly to be understood) shaved his head, in performance of a Nazarite vow he had formerly made, the time whereof was now run out. In his passage into Syria he came to Ephesus, where he preached awhile in the synagogue of the Jews. And though desired to stay with them, yet having resolved to be at Jerusalem at the passover, (probably that he might have the fitter opportunity to meet his friends, and preach the gospel to those vast numbers that usually flocked to that great solemnity,) he promised that in his return he would come again to them. Sailing thence, he landed at Cæsarea, and thence went up to Jerusalem; where having visited the church, and kept the feast, he went down to Antioch. Here having staid some

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xviii. 18.



time, he traversed the countries of Galatia and Phrygia, confirming, as he went, the new-converted Christians, and so came to Ephesus; where finding certain Christian disciples, he inquired of them, whether, since their conversion, they had received the miraculous gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost.<sup>1</sup> They told him, that the doctrine which they had received had nothing in it of that nature, nor had they ever heard that any such extraordinary spirit had of late been bestowed upon the church. Hereupon he further inquired unto what they had been baptised? (the Christian baptism being administered in the name of the Holy Ghost.) They answered, they had received no more than John's baptism; which though it obliged men to repentance, yet did it explicitly speak nothing of the Holy Ghost, or its gifts and powers. To this the Apostle replied, that though John's baptism did openly oblige to nothing but repentance, yet that it did implicitly acknowledge the whole doctrine concerning Christ and the Holy Ghost. Whereto they assenting, were solemnly initiated by Christian baptism, and the apostle laying his hands upon them, they immediately received the Holy Ghost, in the gift of tongues, prophecy, and other miraculous powers conferred upon them.

4. After this he entered into the Jewish synagogues, where for the first three months he contended and disputed with the Jews, endeavouring with great earnestness and resolution to convince them of the truth of those things that concerned the Christian religion. But when, instead of success,

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xix. 1.

he met with nothing but refractoriness and infidelity, he left the synagogue, and taking those with him whom he had converted, instructed them, and others that resorted to him, in the school of one Tyrannus, a place where scholars were wont to be educated and instructed.<sup>1</sup> In this manner he continued for two years together; in which time the Jews and proselytes of the whole proconsular Asia had opportunity of having the gospel preached to them. And because miracles are the clearest evidence of a divine commission, and the most immediate credentials of heaven, those which do nearest affect our senses, and consequently have the strongest influence upon our minds, therefore God was pleased to ratify the doctrine which St. Paul delivered by great and miraculous operations; and those of somewhat a more peculiar and extraordinary nature. Insomuch that he did not only heal those that came to him, but if napkins or handkerchiefs were but touched by him, and applied unto the sick, their diseases immediately vanished, and the demons and evil spirits departed out of those that were possessed by them.

5. Ephesus,<sup>2</sup> above all other places in the world, was noted of old for the study of magic, and all secret and hidden arts, whence the *Ἐφέσια γράμματα* so often spoken of by the ancients, which

<sup>1</sup> Some commentators have conjectured that Tyrannus was a title, not a name; but there appears no sufficient ground for this supposition. He is generally believed to have been the master of one of those schools which were common among the Jews, and were instituted for private instruction, as those over which the rabbis, or a consistory presided, were for the teaching of the law in a more public way.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> *Ἐφέσια γράμματα*, ἐπὶ τοῖς ἑσπέραις τινὲς δυσπαράκολέθητοι. Suid. in voc. *Ἐφέσ. γράμμ.* vid. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. i. p. 305, 306.

were certain obscure and mystical spells and charms, by which they endeavoured to heal diseases and drive away evil spirits, and do things beyond the reach and apprehensions of common people.<sup>1</sup> Besides other professors of this black art, there were at this time at Ephesus certain Jews, who dealt in the arts of exorcism and incantation; a craft and mystery which Josephus<sup>2</sup> affirms to have been derived from Solomon;<sup>3</sup> who, he tells us, did not only find it out, but composed forms of exorcism and enchantment, whereby to cure diseases, and expel demons, so as they should never return again; and adds, *καὶ αὕτη μέχρι νῦν παρ ἡμῖν ἡ θεραπεῖα πλεῖστον ἰσχύει*, "that this art was still in force among the Jews;" instances whereof, he tells us, he himself had seen, having beheld one Eleazar, a

<sup>1</sup> Much curious learning has been employed in the examinations of this subject. The Ephesian incantations, *Ἐφέσια ἀλεξιφάρμακα*, are alluded to as a proverb by Menander; and the *Ἐφέσια γράμματα*, or Ephesian letters, appear to have been six mystical words, which being bound on some part of the person, in a similar manner probably as the phylacteries of the Jews, were considered a sufficient protection against harm. The names of these letters were:—1. Askion; 2. Kataskion; 3. Lin; 4. Tetras; 5. Damnamenens; 6. Asion; the signification of which was said to be:—darkness, light, the earth, the year, the sun, and truth. Combatants in the public games were accustomed to wear these charms about them as a means of strength.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Antiq. Jud. lib. viii. cap. 2, p. 257.

<sup>3</sup> Solomon might have imbibed a love of magical arts from some of the heathen women, who blinded his understanding in so many other respects; or the extensive knowledge of nature which he possessed might, among an uneducated people, have led to the notion of his using incantations; as was the case with the scholars and philosophers who advanced beyond their contemporaries in the middle ages. But there is no room for believing that the enchantments practised by the Jewish exorcists had their origin with the son of David, whose name was probably only used to give dignity and authority to the art.—ED.

Jew, in the presence of Vespasian, his sons, and the great officers of his army, curing demoniacs, by holding a ring to their nose, under whose seal was hid the root of a certain plant, prescribed by Solomon, at the scent whereof the demon presently took leave and was gone, the patient falling to the ground, while the exorcist, by mentioning Solomon, and reciting some charms made by him, stood over him, and charged the evil spirit never to return. And to let them see that he was really gone, he commanded the demon, as he went out, to overturn a cup full of water, which he had caused to be set in the room before them. In the number of these conjurers now at Ephesus, there were the seven sons of Sceva, one of the chief heads of the families of the priests, who seeing what great things were done by calling over demoniacs the name of Christ, attempted themselves to do the like, conjuring the evil spirit in the name of that Jesus, whom Paul preached, to depart. But the stubborn demon would not obey the warrant, telling them, he knew who Jesus and Paul were, but did not understand what authority they had to use his name. And not content with this, forced the demoniac violently to fall upon them, to tear their clothes, and wound their bodies; scarce suffering them to escape with the safety of their lives. An accident that begot great terror in the minds of men, and became the occasion of converting many to the faith; who came to the apostle, and confessed the former course and manner of their lives. Several also, who had traded in curious arts, and the mysterious methods of spells and charms, freely brought their books of magic rites, (whose price, had they been to be sold, according to the rates

which men who dealt in those cursed mysteries put upon them, would have amounted to the value of above one thousand five hundred pounds,<sup>1</sup>) and openly burnt them before the people; themselves adjudging them to those flames to which they were condemned by the laws of the empire.<sup>2</sup> For so we find the Roman laws<sup>3</sup> prohibiting any to keep books of magic arts, and that where any such were found, their goods should be forfeited, the books publicly burned, the persons banished; and, if of a meaner rank, beheaded. These books the penitent converts did of their own accord sacrifice to the fire, not tempted to spare them either by their former love to them, or the present price and value of them. With so mighty an efficacy did the gospel prevail over the minds of men.

6. About this time it was that the apostle writ his epistle to the Galatians. For he had heard that since his departure, corrupt opinions had got in amongst them about the necessary observation of the legal rites; and that several impostors were crept into that church, who knew no better way to undermine the doctrine he had planted there, than by vilifying his person, slighting him as an apostle

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix. 19. συνεψήφισαν τὰς τιμὰς αὐτῶν, ἃ εὔρον ἀργυρίῳ μυριάδας πέντε. Ἀργύριον Græcorum valuit Drachmam Atticam, adeoque nostri 7d. ob. Ac proinde Ἀργυρί- myriades quinque nummi nostri summam conficiunt 1562l. 10s.

<sup>2</sup> But reckoning the pieces of silver as Jewish shekels, at three shillings each, the value usually assigned them, the sum was seven thousand five hundred pounds; or if, as some authors think, the Roman sestertius was meant, the value of the books was only a little more than four hundred pounds.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Paul. J. C. Sentent. lib. v. Sent. 21, Sect. 4, Tit. 23, ad leg. Cornel. de Sicar. et Venefic. vid. leg. 4, ff. famil. hercisc. Sect. 1, lib. x. T. 2, et lib. xii. C. Theod. de Malef. et Mathem. lib. ix. Tit. 16.

only at the second hand, not to be compared with Peter, James, and John, who had familiarly conversed with Christ in the days of his flesh, and been immediately deputed by him. In this epistle, therefore, he reproves them with some necessary smartness and severity, that they had been so soon led out of that right way wherein he had set them, and had so easily suffered themselves to be imposed upon by the crafty artifices of seducers. He vindicates the honour of his apostolate, and the immediate receiving his commission from Christ, wherein he shows, that he came not behind the very best of those apostles. He largely refutes those judaical opinions that had tainted and infected them, and in the conclusion instructs them in the rules and duties of a holy life. While the apostle thus stayed at Ephesus, he resolved with himself to pass through Macedonia and Achaia, thence to Jerusalem, and so to Rome. But for the present altered his resolution, and continued still at Ephesus.

7. During his stay in this place, an accident happened, that involved him in great trouble and danger. Ephesus, above all the cities of the east, was renowned for the famous temple of Diana, one of the stateliest temples of the world. It was (as Pliny tells us<sup>1</sup>) the very wonder of magnificence, built at the common charges of all Asia properly so called, two hundred and twenty years (elsewhere he says four hundred<sup>2</sup>) in building, which we are to understand of its successive rebuildings and reparations, being often wasted and destroyed. It

<sup>1</sup> H. Natur. lib. xxxvi. c. 14, p. 716.

<sup>2</sup> Lib. xvi. c. 40, p. 336.

Σοὶ ὃ Ἀμαζονίδες  
Ἐνκοτε παρράλιν Ἐφίση βρετας ἰδρύσαντο.

was four hundred and twenty-five feet long, two hundred and twenty broad, supported by one hundred and twenty-seven pillars, sixty feet high; for its antiquity, it was in some degree before the times of Bacchus, equal to the reign of the Amazons, (by whom it is generally said to have been first built,) as the Ephesian ambassadors told Tiberius,<sup>1</sup> till by degrees it grew up into that greatness and splendour, that it was generally reckoned one of the seven wonders of the world. But that which gave the greatest fame and reputation to it, was an image of Diana kept there, made of no very costly materials, but which the crafty priests persuaded the people was beyond all human artifice or contrivement; and that it was immediately formed by Jupiter, and dropped down from heaven; having first killed, or banished the artists that made it, (as Suidas informs us,<sup>2</sup>) that the cheat might not be discovered; by which means they drew not Ephesus only, but the whole world into a mighty veneration of it. Besides there were within this temple multitudes of silver cabinets, or chappelets, little shrines, made in fashion of the temple, wherein was placed the image of Diana: For the making of these holy shrines, great numbers of silversmiths were employed and maintained; among whom one Demetrius was a leading man, who foreseeing that if the Christian religion still got ground, their gainful trade would soon come to nothing, presently called together the men of his profession, especially those whom he himself

—— τῆ δ' ἔτι θεώτερον ὄψεται ἡώς,  
Οὐδ' ἀφνειότερον ῥέα κέν Πυθῶνα παρέλθοι.

Callim. in Dian. Hymn. 2, p. 23.

—— περιώσιον ἀνδράσι θαῦμα.

Dionys. Perieg. v. 829.

<sup>1</sup> Tacit. Annal. lib. iii. 61, p. 117. <sup>2</sup> Suid. in voc. Διοσιπέτης.

set on work; told them, that now their welfare and livelihood were concerned, and that the fortunes of their wives and children lay at stake; that it was plain that this Paul had perverted city and country, and persuaded the people that the images which they made and worshipped were no real gods; by which means their trade was not only like to fall to the ground, but also the honour and magnificence of the great goddess Diana, whom not Asia only, but the whole world did worship and adore. Enraged with this discourse, they cried out with one voice, that 'Great was Diana of the Ephesians.' The whole city was presently in an uproar, and seizing upon two of St. Paul's companions, they hurried them into the theatre, probably with a design to have cast them to the wild beasts. St. Paul hearing of their danger, would have ventured himself among them, had not the Christians, nay, some even of the Gentile priests, governors of the popular games and sports, earnestly dissuaded him from it; well knowing that the people were resolved, if they could meet with him, to throw him to the wild beasts, that were kept there for the disport and pleasure of the people. And this doubtless he means, when elsewhere he tells us, that 'he fought with beasts at Ephesus;'<sup>1</sup> probably intending what the people designed, though he did not actually suffer; though the brutish rage, the savage and inhuman manners of this people did sufficiently deserve that the censure and character should be fixed upon themselves.

8. Great was the confusion of the multitude, the major part not knowing the reason of the concourse :

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv.



in which distraction Alexander, a Jewish convert, being thrust forward by the Jews, to be questioned and examined about this matter, he would accordingly have made his apology to the people, intending no doubt to clear himself by casting the whole blame upon St. Paul; this being, very probably, that Alexander the coppersmith, of whom our apostle elsewhere complains, 'that he did him much evil, and greatly withstood his words;'<sup>1</sup> and 'whom he delivered over unto satan' for his apostacy, for blaspheming Christ, and reproaching Christianity. But the multitude perceiving him to be a Jew, and thereby suspecting him to be one of St. Paul's associates, began to raise an outcry for near two hours together, wherein nothing could be heard, but 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians.' The noise being a little over, the recorder, a discreet and prudent man, came out and calmly told them, that it was sufficiently known to all the world, what a mighty honour and veneration the city of Ephesus had for the great goddess Diana, and the famous image which fell from heaven, that therefore there needed not this stir to vindicate and assert it; that they had seized persons who were not guilty either of sacrilege or blasphemy towards their goddess; that if Demetrius and his company had any just charge against them, the courts were sitting, and they might prefer their indictment; or if the controversy were about any other matter, it might be referred to such a proper judicature as the law appoints for the determination of such cases; that therefore they should do well to be quiet, having done more already than they could answer, if

<sup>1</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 14; 1 Tim. i. 20.

called in question, (as it is like they would,) there being no cause sufficient to justify that day's riotous assembly. With which prudent discourse he appeased and dismissed the multitude.

9. It was about this time that St. Paul heard of some disturbance in the church at Corinth, hatched and fomented by a pack of false, heretical teachers, crept in among them, who endeavoured to draw them into parties and factions, by persuading one party to be for Peter, another for Paul, a third for Apollos; as if the main of religion consisted in being of this or that denomination, or in a warm active zeal to decry and oppose whoever is not of our narrow sect. It is a very weak and slender claim, when a man holds his religion by no better a title than that he has joined himself to this man's church, or that man's congregation, and is zealously earnest to maintain and promote it; to be childish and passionately clamorous for one man's mode and way of administration, or for some particular humour or opinion; as if religion lay in nice and curious disputes, or in separating from our brethren, and not rather 'in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' By this means schisms and factions broke into the Corinthian church, whereby many wild and extravagant opinions, and some of them such as undermined the fundamental articles of Christianity, were planted, and had taken root there. As the envious man never fishes more successfully than in troubled waters. To cure these distempers St. Paul (who had received an account of all these by letters which Apollos and some others had brought to him from the church of Corinth) writes his first epistle to them: wherein he smartly reproves them for their schisms and parties,

conjures them to peace and unity, corrects those gross corruptions that were introduced among them, and particularly resolves those many cases and controversies wherein they had requested his advice and counsel. Shortly after Apollos designing to go for Crete, by him and Zenas St. Paul sends his epistle to Titus, whom he made bishop of that island, and had left there for the propagating of the gospel. Herein he fully instructs him in the execution of his office, how to carry himself, and what directions he should give to others, to all particular ranks and relations of men, especially those who were to be advanced to places of office and authority in the church.

10. A little before St. Paul's departure from Ephesus, we may not improbably suppose, that Apollonius Tyaneus, the famous philosopher and magician of the heathen world, (a man remarkable for the strictness of his manners, and his sober and regular course of life, but especially for the great miracles said to have been done by him; whom therefore the heathens generally set up as the great co-rival of our Saviour; though some of his own party, and particularly Euphratus<sup>1</sup> the philoso-

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. lib. iv. contra Hierocl. p. 530, ad calc. Demonstr. Evang.

Lardner observes on a passage in Cudworth, which nearly agrees with the words of our author, that he cannot assent to the opinion it conveys, though he believes it to be that of many other learned men: "With due submission," says he, "I do not think that Apollonius was a man of so great importance as is here supposed; for it does not appear that any adversaries of the Christians, either Celsus or Porphyry, or any other, before Hierocles, at the beginning of the fourth century, under Dioclesian's persecution, ever took any notice of him in any of their arguments."—Works, vol. viii. p. 264.

The heathen writer, Moeragenes, does not simply call him a

pher, who lived with him at the same time at Rome, accused him for doing his strange feats by magic) came to Ephesus. The enemy of mankind probably designing to obstruct the propagation of Christianity, by setting up one who by the arts of magic might, at least in the vogue and estimation of the people, equal, or eclipse the miracles of St. Paul. Certain it is, if we compare times and actions set down by the writer of his life,<sup>1</sup> we shall find that he came hither about the beginning of Nero's reign; and he particularly sets down the strange things that were done by him, especially his clearing the city of a grievous plague; for which the people of Ephesus had him in such veneration, that they erected a statue to him as to a particular deity, and did divine honour to it. But whether this was before St. Paul's going thence, I will not take upon me to determine; it seems most probable to have been done afterwards.

magician, but accuses him of practising arts that were infamous and diabolical; which scarcely agrees with our author's panegyric expressions, evidently founded on his history by Philostratus; from which, however, Eusebius did by no means draw a similar conclusion, for he says, it will of itself afford sufficient proof that Apollonius was so far from deserving to be compared with our Lord, that he did not deserve to be ranked with even moderately honest men.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Philostr. de vit. Apoll. Tyan. lib. iv. cap. 1, p. 159, et c. 12, p. 194, confer. lib. v. Ibid. lib. iv. c. 3, p. 164, vid. Euseb. in Hierocl. lib. iv. apud Philostr. p. 457.

## SECTION V.

*St. Paul's acts, from his departure from Ephesus till his arraignment before Felix.*

IT was not long after the tumult at Ephesus, when St. Paul having called the church together, and constituted Timothy bishop of that place, took his leave, and departed by Troas for Macedonia. And at this time it was, that, as he himself tells us, he 'preached the gospel round about unto Illyricum,'<sup>1</sup> since called Sclavonia, some parts of Macedonia bordering on that province. From Macedonia, he returned back unto Greece, where he abode three months, and met with Titus, lately come with great contributions from the church at Corinth. By whose example he stirred up the liberality of the Macedonians, who very freely, and somewhat beyond their ability, contributed to the poor Christians at Jerusalem. From Titus he had an account of the present state of the church at Corinth; and by him at his return, together with St. Luke, he sent his second epistle to them. Wherein he endeavours to set right what his former epistle had not yet effected: to vindicate his apostleship from that contempt and scorn, and himself from those slanders and aspersions, which the seducers, who had found themselves lashed by his first epistle, had cast upon him, together with some other particular cases relating to them. Much about the same time<sup>2</sup> he writ his first

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xx. 1.

<sup>2</sup> That is, about the year 57; but this date is strongly ob-

epistle to Timothy, whom he had left at Ephesus, wherein at large he counsels him how to carry himself in the discharge of that great place and authority in the church, which he had committed to him; instructs him in the particular qualifications of those whom he should make choice of, to be bishops and ministers in the church; how to order the deaconesses, and to instruct servants; warning him withal of that pestilent generation of heretics and seducers that would arise in the church. During his three months' stay in Greece, he went to Corinth, whence he wrote his famous epistle to the Romans, which he sent by Phœbe, a deaconess of the church of Cenchrea, nigh Corinth; wherein his main design is fully to state and determine the great controversy between the Jews and Gentiles, about the obligation of the rites and ceremonies of the Jewish law, and those main and material doctrines of Christianity, which did depend upon it, such as of Christian liberty, the use of indifferent things, &c. And which is the main end of all religion, instructs them in, and presses them to the duties of a holy and good life, such as the Christian doctrine does naturally tend to oblige men to.

2. St. Paul being now resolved for Syria, to convey the contributions to the brethren at Jerusalem, was awhile diverted from that resolution, by a design he was told of which the Jews had to kill and rob him by the way. Whereupon he went back into Macedonia, and so came to Philippi, and thence went to Troas; where having stayed a week,

jected to by many critics, who think there is sufficient internal evidence to prove that the epistle was written subsequently to the apostle's imprisonment at Rome, or as late as the year 64.—ED.

on the Lord's-day, the church met together to receive the holy sacrament. Here St. Paul preached to them, and continued his discourse till midnight, the longer probably, being the next day to depart from them. The length of his discourse, and the time of the night, had caused some of his auditors to be overtaken with sleep and drowsiness, among whom a young man called Eutychus, being fast asleep, fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead, but whom St. Paul presently restored to life and health. How indefatigable was the industry of our apostle; how close did he tread in his master's steps, who 'went about doing good!' He compassed sea and land, preached and wrought miracles wherever he came. In every place, like a wise master-builder, he either laid a foundation, or raised the superstructure. He was 'instant in season and out of season,' and spared not his pains, either night or day, that he might do good to the souls of men. The night being thus spent in holy exercises, St. Paul in the morning took his leave, and went on foot to Assos, a sea-port town, whither he had sent his company by sea. Thence they set sail to Mitylene; from thence to Samos, and having stayed some little time at Trogyllium, the next day came to Miletus, not so much as putting in at Ephesus, because the apostle was resolved, if possible, to be at Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost.

3. At Miletus he sent to Ephesus,<sup>1</sup> to summon the bishops and governors of the church, who being come, he put them in mind with what uprightness and integrity, with what affection and humility,

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxi. 17.

with how great trouble and danger, with how much faithfulness to their souls he had been conversant among them, and had preached the gospel to them, ever since his first coming into those parts; that he had not failed to acquaint them, both publicly and privately, with whatever might be useful and profitable to them, urging, both upon Jews and Gentiles, repentance and reformation of life, and a hearty entertainment of the faith of Christ; that now he was resolved to go to Jerusalem, where he did not know what particular sufferings would befall him, more than this, that it had been foretold him in every place by those who were endued with the prophetical gifts of the Holy Ghost, that afflictions and imprisonment would attend him there; but that he was not troubled at this, no, nor unwilling to lay down his life, so he might but successfully preach the gospel, and faithfully serve his Lord in that place and station wherein he had set him; that he knew that henceforth they should see his face no more; but that this was his encouragement and satisfaction, that they themselves could bear him witness, that he had not, by concealing from them any parts of the Christian doctrine, betrayed their souls: that as for themselves, whom God had made bishops and pastors of his church, they should be careful to feed, guide, and direct those Christians under their inspection, and be infinitely tender of the good of souls, for whose redemption Christ laid down his own life; that all the care they could use was no more than necessary, it being certain, that after his departure, heretical teachers would break in among them, and endanger the ruin of men's souls: nay, that even among themselves, there would some arise, who by



subtile and crafty methods, by corrupt and pernicious doctrines would gain proselytes to their party, and thereby make rents and schisms in the church; that therefore they should watch, remembering with what tears and sorrow he had, for three years together, warned them of these things; that now he recommended them to the divine care and goodness, and to the rules and instructions of the gospel, which if adhered to, would certainly dispose and perfect them for that state of happiness which God had prepared for good men in heaven. In short, that as he had all along dealt faithfully and uprightly with them, they might know from hence, that in all his preaching he had no crafty or covetous designs upon any man's estate or riches; having (as themselves could witness) industriously laboured with his own hands, and by his own work maintained both himself and his company; herein leaving them an example, what pains they ought to take to support the weak, and relieve the poor, rather than to be themselves chargeable unto others; according to that incomparable saying of our Saviour, (which surely St. Paul had received from some of those that had conversed with him in the days of the flesh,) 'It is more blessed to give, than to receive.' This *concio ad clerum*, or visitation sermon being ended, the apostle kneeled down, and concluded all with prayer. Which done, they all melted into tears, and with the greatest expressions of sorrow attended him to the ship, though that which made the deepest impression upon their minds was, that he had told them, 'that they should see his face no more.'

4. Departing from Miletus, they arrived at Coos, thence came to Rhodes, thence to Patara, thence to

Tyre;<sup>1</sup> where meeting with some Christians, he was advised by those among them who had the gift of prophecy, that he should not go up to Jerusalem : with them he staid a week, and then going all together to the shore, he kneeled down and prayed with them ; and having mutually embraced one another, he went on board, and came to Ptolemais, where only saluting the brethren, they came next day unto Cæsarea. Here they lodged in the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the seven deacons that were at first set apart by the apostles, who had four virgin daughters, all endued with the gift of prophecy. During their stay in this place, Agabus, a Christian prophet, came down hither from Judæa, who taking Paul's girdle, bound with it his own hands and feet, telling them, that by this external symbol the Holy Ghost did signify and declare, that St. Paul should be thus served by the Jews at Jerusalem, and be by them delivered over into the hands of the Gentiles. Whereupon they all passionately besought him that he would divert his course to some other place. The apostle asked them what they meant by these compassionate dissuasives to add more affliction to his sorrow ; that he was willing and resolved not only to be imprisoned ; but, if need were, to die at Jerusalem for the sake of Christ and his religion. Finding his resolution fixed and immovable, they importuned him no further, but left the event to the divine will and pleasure. All things being in readiness, they set forwards on their journey ; and being come to Jerusalem, were kindly and joyfully entertained by the Christians there.

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxi. 1.

5. The next day after their arrival, St. Paul and his company went to the house of St. James the apostle, where the rest of the bishops and governors of the church were met together:<sup>1</sup> after mutual salutations, he gave them a particular account with what success God had blessed him in propagating Christianity among the Gentiles; for which they all heartily blessed God; but withal told him, that he was now come to a place where there were many thousands of Jewish converts, who all retained a mighty zeal and veneration for the law of Moses; and who had been informed of him, that he taught the Jews, whom he had converted, in every place, to renounce circumcision and the ceremonies of the law; that as soon as the multitude heard of his arrival, they would come together to see how he behaved himself in this matter; and therefore to prevent so much disturbance, it was advisable that, there being four men there at that time who were to accomplish a vow, (probably not the Nazarite vow, but some other, which they had made for deliverance from sickness, or some other imminent danger and distress; for so Josephus tells us<sup>2</sup> they were wont to do in such cases, and before they came to offer the accustomed sacrifices, to abstain for some time from wine, and to shave their heads,) he should join himself to them, perform the usual rites and ceremonies with them, and provide such sacrifices for them as the law required in that case; and that, in discharge of their vow, they might shave their heads: whereby it would appear, that the reports which were spread concerning him were false and ground-

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxi. 18.

<sup>2</sup> De Bell. Jud. lib. ii. c. 15.

less, and that he himself did still observe the rites and orders of the Mosaical institution; that as for the Gentile converts, they required no such observances at their hands, nor expected any thing more from them in these indifferent matters, than what had been before determined by the apostolical synod in that place. St. Paul (who in such things was willing 'to become all things to all men, that he might gain the more') consented to the counsel which they gave him; and taking the persons along with him to the temple, told the priests, that the time of a vow which they had made being now run out, and having purified themselves, as the nature of the case required, they were come to make their offerings according to the law.

6. The seven days wherein those sacrifices were to be offered being now almost ended, some Jews that were come from Asia, (where, probably, they had opposed St. Paul,) now finding him in the temple, began to raise a tumult and uproar; and laying hold of him, called out to the rest of the Jews for their assistance; telling them, that this was the fellow that everywhere vented doctrines derogatory to the prerogative of the Jewish nation, destructive to the institutions of the law, and to the purity of that place, which he had profaned by bringing in uncircumcised Greeks into it; positively concluding, that because they had seen Trophimus, a Gentile convert of Ephesus with him in the city, therefore he had brought him also into the temple. So apt is malice to make any premises from whence it may infer its own conclusion. Hereupon the whole city was presently in an uproar, and seizing upon him, they dragged

him out of the temple, the doors being presently shut against him. Nor had they failed there to put a period to all his troubles, had not Claudius Lysias, commander of the Roman garrison in the tower of Antonia, come in with some soldiers to his rescue and deliverance; and supposing him to be a more than ordinary malefactor, commanded a double chain to be put upon him, though as yet altogether ignorant, either who he, or what his crime was, and wherein he could receive little satisfaction from the clamorous multitude, who called for nothing but his death, following the cry with such crowds and numbers that the soldiers were forced to take him into their arms, to secure him from the present rage and violence of the people. As they were going up into the castle, St. Paul asked the governor whether he might have the liberty to speak to him, who finding him to speak Greek, inquired of him whether he was not that Egyptian which a few years before had raised a sedition in Judæa, and headed a party of four thousand debauched and profligate wretches. The apostle replied, that he was a Jew of Tarsus, a freeman of a rich and honourable city, and therefore begged of him, that he might have leave to speak to the people; which the captain readily granted; and standing near the door of the castle, and making signs that they would hold their peace, he began to address himself to them in the Hebrew language: which when they heard they became a little more calm and quiet, while he discoursed to them to this effect.

7. He gave them an account of himself from his birth; of his education in his youth, of the mighty zeal which he had for the rites and customs

of their religion, and with what a passionate earnestness he persecuted and put to death all the Christians that he met with, whereof the high-priest and the Sanhedrim could be sufficient witnesses.<sup>1</sup> He next gave them an entire and punctual relation of the way and manner of his conversion; and how that he had received an immediate command from God himself to depart Jerusalem, and preach unto the Gentiles. At this word the patience of the Jews could hold no longer, but they unanimously cried out to have him put to death, it not being fit that such a villain should live upon the earth. And the more to express their fury, they threw off their clothes, and cast dust into the air, as if they immediately designed to stone him; to avoid which the captain of the guard commanded him to be brought within the castle, and that he should be examined by whipping, till he confessed the reason of so much rage against him. While the lictor was binding him in order to it, he asked the centurion that stood by, whether they could justify the scourging a citizen of Rome, and that before any sentence legally passed upon him?<sup>2</sup> This the centurion presently intimated to the governor of the castle, bidding him have a care what he did, for the prisoner was a Roman. Whereat the governor himself came, and

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> "Cædebatur virgis in medio foro Messanæ Civis Romanus, cum interea nullus gemitus, nulla vox alia istius miseri audiebatur, nisi hæc, civis Romanus sum. Hac se commemoratione civitatis omnia verbera depulsurum arbitrabatur.—O nomen dulce libertatis! O jus eximium nostræ civitatis! O lex Porcia, legesque Sempronie!"—Cicer. in Ver. lib. vii. tom. ii. p. 218. "Facinus est vincire civem Romanum, scelus verberare."—Id. ib. p. 220, vid. suprâ sect. 3, num. 4.

asked him, whether he was a free denizen of Rome ; and being told that he was, he replied, that it was a great privilege, a privilege which he himself had purchased at a considerable rate. To whom St. Paul answered, that it was his birth-right, and the privilege of the place where he was born and bred.<sup>1</sup> Hereupon they gave over their design of whipping him ; the commander himself being a little startled, that he had bound and chained a denizen of Rome.

8. The next day the governor ordered his chains to be knocked off ; and that he might thoroughly satisfy himself in the matter, commanded the Sanhedrim to meet, and brought down Paul before them : where being set before the council, he told them, that in all passages of his life he had been careful to act according to the severest rules and conscience of his duty. ‘Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.’<sup>2</sup> Behold here the great security of a good man, and what invisible supports innocence affords under the greatest danger !<sup>3</sup> With how generous a confidence does virtue and honesty guard the breast of a good man ! as indeed nothing

<sup>1</sup> Tarsus, it is supposed, derived its privileges as a free Roman city from a grant made by Julius Cæsar ; and there is every reason to believe that Paul owed his Roman citizenship to his birth in this place ; but some learned men have conjectured that he derived it from his father, who is thought to have been made free of Rome for his services to the state.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> Acts, xxiii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Εἰς αὐτὸν συνειλᾷ, φύσιν ἔχει τὸ λογικὸν ἡγεμονικόν, αὐτῷ ἀρκεῖσθαι δικαιοπραγεῖντι, ἢ παρ’ αὐτὸ τῷτο γαλήνην ἔχοντι.—M. Ant. τῶν εἰς αὐτ. lib. vii. sect. 28, p. 63.

“Justum et tenacem propositi virum,  
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,

else can lay a firm basis and foundation for satisfaction and tranquillity, when any misery or calamity does overtake us. Religion and a good conscience beget peace and a heaven in the man's bosom, beyond the power of the little accidents of this world to ruffle and discompose. Whence Seneca<sup>1</sup> compares the mind of a wise and good man to the state of the upper region, which is always serene and calm. The high-priest Ananias being offended at the holy and ingenuous freedom of our apostle, as if by asserting his own innocence he had reproached the justice of their tribunal, commanded those that stood next him, to strike him in the face; whereto the apostle tartly replied, that God would smite him, hypocrite as he was, who under a pretence of doing justice, had illegally commanded him to be punished, before the law condemned him for a malefactor. Whereupon they that stood by asked him, how he durst thus affront so sacred and venerable a person as God's high-priest. He calmly returned, that he did not know (or own) Ananias to be a high-priest (of God's appointment.)<sup>2</sup> However, being a person in autho-

Non vultus instantis tyranni  
 Mente quatit solida: neque auster  
 Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ,  
 Nec fulminantis magna Jovis manus.  
 Si fractus illabatur orbis,  
 Impavidum ferient ruinæ."

Horat. Carm. lib. iii. Od. 3, p. 154.

<sup>1</sup> "Sapiens ille est plenus gaudio, hilaris, et placidus, inconcussus, cum diis ex pari vivit: per dies noctesque par et æqualis animi tenor erecti et placentis sibi est.—Talis est sapientis animus, qualis mundi status super lunam, semper illic serenum est, nunquam sine gaudio est. Gaudium hoc non nascitur, nisi ex virtutum conscientia."—Senec. Epist. 59, p. 152

<sup>2</sup> "Hæc Pauli verba Ananias et apparitores sic accipiebant,



city, it was not lawful to revile him, God himself having commanded, that 'no man should speak evil of the ruler of the people.'<sup>1</sup> The apostle, who, as he never laid aside the innocency of the dove, so knew how, when occasion was, to make use of the wisdom of the serpent; perceiving the council to consist partly of Sadducees and partly of Pharisees, openly told them that he was a Pharisee, and the son of a Pharisee; and that the main thing he was questioned for, was his belief of a future resurrection. This quickly divided the council; the Pharisees being zealous patrons of that article, and the Sadducees as stiffly denying that there is either angel (that is, of a spiritual and immortal nature, really subsisting of itself; for otherwise they cannot be supposed to have utterly denied all sorts of angels, seeing they owned the Pentateuch, wherein there is frequent

*quasi excusaret Paulus quod sibi in istis malis constituto non satis in mentem venisset, quicum sibi res esset. Verum latentior sensus suberat, non esse eum sacerdotem, aut principem senatûs, qui eas dignitates pretio comparâset. Didicerat enim hoc à Gamaliele Paulus; Judicem qui honoris consequendi causâ pecunias dederit, reverà neque judicem esse, neque honorandum, sed asini habendum loco, ut est in Titulo Talmudico de Synedrio.*"—Grot. in loc.

<sup>1</sup> It is plain from the general tendency of Paul's doctrine and behaviour, that if he refused to own Ananias as high-priest, he did so not from his own private opinions of his demerits, but from the certainty that the law was against his holding that office; and it is scarcely to be believed, that if he thus solemnly disputed his authority he would have so suddenly softened his rebuke. The more probable supposition is, that Paul's long absence from Jerusalem, the changes which had taken place in the high offices of the nation, together with the confusion that prevailed in the assembly described, did really prevent him from knowing the person of the high-priest, who it is to be remembered was not clad as if he had been ministering in the temple.—Ed.

mention of them) or spirit, or that human souls do exist in a separate state, and consequently that there is no resurrection. Presently the doctors of the law, who were Pharisees, stood up to acquit him, affirming he had done nothing amiss; that it was possible he had received some intimation from heaven by an angel, or the revelation of the Holy Spirit; and if so, then in opposing his doctrine, they might fight against God himself.

9. Great were the dissensions in the council about this matter, insomuch that the governor fearing St. Paul would be torn in pieces, commanded the soldiers to take him from the bar, and return him back into the castle. That night, to comfort him after all his frights and fears, God was pleased to appear to him in a vision, encouraging him to constancy and resolution, assuring him, that as he had borne witness to his cause at Jerusalem, so, in despite of all his enemies, he should live to bear his testimony even at Rome itself. The next morning the Jews, who could as well cease to be as to be mischievous and malicious, finding that these dilatory proceedings were not like to do the work, resolved upon a quicker dispatch. To which end above forty of them entered into a wicked confederacy, which they ratified by oath and execration, never to eat or drink till they had killed him; and having acquainted the Sanhedrim with their design, they entreated them to importune the governor, that he might again, the next day, be brought down before them, under pretence of a more strict trial of his case, and that they themselves would lie in ambush by the way, and not fail to dispatch him. But that Divine Providence which peculiarly superintends the safety of good men,

‘disappoints the devices of the crafty.’ The design was discovered to St. Paul by a nephew of his, and by him imparted to the governor, who immediately commanded two parties of foot and horse to be ready by nine of the clock that night, and provision to be made for St. Paul’s carriage to Felix, the Roman governor of that province: to whom also he wrote, signifying whom he had sent, how the Jews had used him; and that his enemies also should appear before him to manage the charge and accusation. Accordingly he was, by night, conducted to Antipatris, and afterwards to Cæsarea, where the letters being delivered to Felix, the apostle was presented to him; and finding that he belonged to the province of Cilicia, he told him, that as soon as his accusers were arrived he should have a hearing; commanding him in the mean time to be secured in the place called Herod’s Hall.

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## SECTION VI.

*Of St. Paul, from his first trial before Felix till his coming to Rome.*

NOT many days after, down comes Ananias’ the high-priest, with some others of the Sanhedrim, to Cæsarea, accompanied with Tertullus, their advocate, who, in a short, but neat speech, set off with all the flattering and insinuating arts of eloquence,

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxiv.

began to implead our apostle, charging him with sedition, heresy, and the profanation of the temple, and adding, that they would have saved the governor the trouble of this hearing, by judging him according to their own law, had not Lysias the commander violently taken him from them, and sent both him and them down thither. To all which the Jews that were with him gave in their vote and testimony. St. Paul having leave from Felix to defend himself; and having told him how much he was satisfied in having to plead before one who, for so many years had been governor of that nation, distinctly answered to the several parts of the charge.

2. And first, for sedition: he point-blank denied it, affirming that they found him behaving himself quietly and peaceably in the temple, not so much as disputing there, nor stirring up the people either in the synagogues, or any other place of the city. And though this was plausibly pretended by them, yet were they never able to make it good. As for the charge of heresy, that he was a ring-leader of the sect of the Nazarenes, he ingenuously acknowledged that after the way which they counted heresy, so he worshipped God; the same way in substance wherein all the patriarchs of the Jewish nation had worshipped God before him, taking nothing into his creed, but what the authentic writers of the Jews themselves did own and justify; that he firmly believed what the better of themselves were ready to grant, another life, and a future resurrection; in the hope and expectation whereof he was careful to live unblamable, and conscientiously to do his duty both to God and men. As for the third part of the charge, his profaning of the temple, he shows how little foundation there was

for it; that the design of his coming to Jerusalem was to bring charitable contributions to his distressed brethren; that he was indeed in the temple, but not as some Asiatic Jews falsely suggested, either with tumult or with multitude; but only purifying himself according to the rites and customs of the Mosaic law; and that if any would affirm the contrary, they should now come into open court and make it good. Nay, that he appealed to those of the Sanhedrim that were there present, whether he had not been acquitted by their own great council at Jerusalem, where nothing of moment had been laid to his charge, except by them of the Sadducean party, who quarrelled with him only for asserting the doctrine of the resurrection. Felix having thus heard both parties argue, refused to make any final determination in the case, till he had more fully advised about it, and spoken with Lysias, commander of the garrison, who was best able to give an account of the sedition and the tumult; commanding, in the mean time, that St. Paul should be under guard; but yet in so free a custody that none of his friends should be hindered from visiting him, or performing any office of kindness and friendship to him.

3. It was not long after this before his wife, Drusilla, (a Jewess, daughter of the elder Herod; and whom Tacitus, I fear by a mistake for his former wife, Drusilla, daughter to Juba, king of Mauritania, makes niece to Anthony and Cleopatra,) came to him to Cæsarea. Who being present, he sent for St. Paul to appear before them, and gave him leave to discourse concerning the doctrine of Christianity. In his discourse he took occasion particularly to insist upon the great obligation which the laws of

Christ lay upon men to justice and righteousness toward one another, to sobriety and chastity both towards themselves and others; withal urging that severe and impartial account that must be given in the judgment of the other world, wherein men shall be arraigned for all the actions of their past life, and be eternally punished or rewarded according to their works. A discourse wisely adapted by the apostle to Felix's state and temper. But corrosives are very uneasy to a guilty mind: men naturally hate that which 'brings their sins to their remembrance,' and sharpens the sting of a violated conscience. The prince was so nettled with the apostle's reasonings, that he fell a trembling, and caused the apostle to break off abruptly, telling him, he would hear the rest at some other season. And good reason there was that Felix's conscience should be sensibly alarmed with these reflections, being a man notoriously infamous for rapine and violence. Tacitus<sup>1</sup> tells us of him, that he made his will the law of his government, practising all manner of cruelty and injustice. And then for incontinency, he was given over to luxury and debauchery; for the compassing whereof he scrupled not to violate all laws both of God and man. Whereof this very wife Drusilla was a famous instance.<sup>2</sup> For, being married by her brother, to Azis, king of the Emisenes, Felix, who had heard of her incomparable beauty, by the help of Simon the magician, a Jew of Cyprus, ravished her from her husband's bed; and in defiance of all law and right, kept her for his own wife.<sup>3</sup> To these quali-

<sup>1</sup> Histor. lib. v. c. 9, p. 538, vid. Annal. lib. xii. c. 54, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph. Antiquit. Jud. lib. xx. c. 5, p. 693.

<sup>3</sup> This Drusilla was the youngest daughter of Herod Agrippa,

ties he had added bribery and covetousness; and therefore frequently sent for St. Paul to discourse with him, expecting that he should have given him a considerable sum for his release; and the rather probably, because he had heard that St. Paul had lately brought up great sums of money to Jerusalem. But finding no offers made, either by the apostle or his friends, he kept him prisoner for two years together, so long as himself continued procurator of that nation; when being displaced by Nero, he left St. Paul still in prison, on purpose to gratify the Jews, and engage them to speak better of him after his departure from them.

4. To him succeeded Portius Festus,<sup>1</sup> in the procuratorship of the province; at whose first coming to Jerusalem, the high-priest and Sanhedrim presently began to prefer to him an indictment against St. Paul, desiring, that in order to his trial, he might be sent for up from Cæsarea; designing, this pretence, that assassins should lie in the way to murder him. Festus told them, that he himself was going shortly for Cæsarea, and that if they had any thing against St. Paul, they should come down thither and accuse him. Accordingly, being come to Cæsarea, and sitting in open judicature, the Jews began to renew the charge which they had heretofore brought against St. Paul; of

and had been originally betrothed to Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus; but this contract was broken, Epiphanes refusing to submit, as he had promised, to the rite of circumcision. Josephus states as above related, that she was enticed from Azizus by the artful persuasions of Simon, the creature of Felix; but adds the important circumstance, that her chief motive for yielding was to avoid the envy and evil machinations of her sister, Bernice, who hated her because of the admiration she excited by her beauty.—ED.

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxv. 1.

all which he cleared himself, they not being able to make any proof against him. However, Festus being willing to oblige the Jews in the entrance upon his government, asked him whether he would go up and be tried before him at Jerusalem. The apostle, well understanding the consequences of that proposal, told him that he was a Roman, and therefore ought to be judged by their laws; that he stood now at Cæsar's own judgment-seat, (as indeed what was done by the emperor's procurator in any province, the law<sup>1</sup> reckoned as done by the emperor himself,) and though he should submit to the Jewish tribunal, yet he himself saw that they had nothing which they could prove against him; that if he had done any thing which really deserved capital punishment, he was willing to undergo it; but if not, he ought not to be delivered over to his enemies, who were before-hand resolved to take away his life. However, as the safest course, he solemnly made his appeal to the Roman emperor, who should judge between them.<sup>2</sup> Whereupon Festus advising with the Jewish Sanhedrim, received his appeal, and told him he should go to Cæsar. This way of appealing was frequent among the Romans, introduced to defend and secure the lives and fortunes of the populacy from the unjust encroachments, and over-rigorous severities of the

<sup>1</sup> L. i. ff. de Offic. Procur. Cæsar. lib. i. tit. 19.

<sup>2</sup> It is not unworthy of observation, that the apostle of the Gentiles thus appealed for justice to a tribunal, and a system of laws, acknowledged by the world at large. The legal institutions of his own nation were mingled with precepts, on which corrupt interpreters had founded arguments destructive of the universality of its moral equity. But he was the first of his people, the first pre-eminently of Christ's disciples, who declared, by a species of providential influence, that the civil institutions of Israel had lost all power and authority.—ED.



magistrates; whereby it was lawful in cases of oppression to appeal to the people for redress and rescue, a thing more than once and again settled by the sanction of the Valerian laws. These appeals<sup>1</sup> were wont to be made in writing, by appellatory libels given in, wherein was contained an account of the appellant; the person against whom, and from whose sentence he did appeal. But where the case was done in open court, it was enough for the criminal verbally to declare that he did appeal:<sup>2</sup> in great and weighty cases appeals were made to the prince himself, and that not only at Rome; but in the provinces of the empire, all proconsuls and governors of provinces being strictly forbidden<sup>3</sup> to execute, scourge, bind, or put any badge of servility upon a citizen, or any that had the privilege of a citizen of Rome, who had made his appeal; or any ways to hinder him from going thither, to obtain justice at the hands of the emperor, who had as much regard to the liberty of his subjects (says the law itself) as they could have of good-will and obedience to him. And this was exactly St. Paul's case, who knowing that he should have no fair and equitable dealing at the hands of the governor, when once he came to be swayed by the Jews, his sworn and inveterate enemies, appealed from him to the emperor; the reason why Festus durst not deny his demand, it being a privilege so often, so plainly settled and confirmed by the Roman laws.

5. Some time after king Agrippa, who succeeded

<sup>1</sup> Leg. 1, Sect. 4, ff. de appellat. lib. xlix. tit. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Leg. 2 et 3, ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. Leg. 25, et l. 7, ff. ad Leg. Jul. de vi public. lib. xlviii. tit. 6.

Herod in the tetrarchate of Galilee, and his sister Bernice came to Cæsarea, to make a visit to the new come governor. To him Festus gave an account of St. Paul, and the great stir and trouble that had been made about him; and how for his safety and vindication he had immediately appealed to Cæsar. Agrippa was very desirous to see and hear him, and accordingly the next day the king and his sister, accompanied with Festus the governor, and other persons of quality, came into the court with a pompous and magnificent retinue, where the prisoner was brought forth before him. Festus having acquainted the king and the assembly, how much he had been solicited by the Jews, both at Cæsarea and Jerusalem, concerning the prisoner at the bar, that as a notorious malefactor he might be put to death; but that having found him guilty of no capital crime, and the prisoner himself having appealed to Cæsar, he was resolved to send him to Rome; but yet was willing to have his case again discussed before Agrippa, that so he might be furnished with some material instructions to send along with him, since it was very absurd to send a prisoner, without signifying what crimes were charged upon him.

6. Hereupon Agrippa told the apostle, he had liberty to make his own defence:<sup>1</sup> to whom, after silence made, he particularly addressed his speech. He tells him, in the first place, what a happiness he had, that he was to plead before one so exactly versed in all the rites and customs, the questions and the controversies of the Jewish law; that the Jews themselves knew what had been the course and

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxvi. 1.

manner of his life, how he had been educated under the institutions of the Pharisees, the strictest sect of the whole Jewish religion, and had been particularly disquieted and arraigned for what had been the constant belief of all their fathers, what was sufficiently credible in itself, and plainly enough revealed in the Scripture, the resurrection of the dead. He next gave him an account with what a bitter and implacable zeal he had formerly persecuted Christianity; told him the whole story and method of his conversion, and that, in compliance with a particular vision from heaven, he had preached repentance and reformation of life first to the Jews, and then after to the Gentiles; that it was for no other things than these that the Jews apprehended him in the temple, and designed to murder him; but being rescued and upheld by a divine power, he continued in this testimony to this day, asserting nothing but what was perfectly agreeable to Moses and the prophets, who had plainly foretold that the Messiah should be put to death and rise again, and by his doctrine enlighten both the Jewish and the Gentile world. While he was thus discoursing, Festus openly cried out, that he talked like a madman,<sup>1</sup> that his overmuch study had put him beside himself. The apostle calmly replied, that he was far from being transported with idle and distracted humours, that he spake nothing but what was most true and real in

<sup>1</sup> The exclamation of Festus afforded a singular testimony to the merits and ability of the apostle. It was evidently forced from him by impatience and astonishment; but it served to cut the knot which his doubts and the difficulty of the case had suddenly created. Paul's politic conduct in appealing to Cæsar, was a sufficient proof of his coolness and prudence, as well as sanity.—ED.

itself, and what very well became that grave, sober auditory. And then, again addressing himself to Agrippa, told him, that these things having been open and public, he could not but be acquainted with them; that he was confident that he believed the prophets, and must needs therefore know that those prophecies were fulfilled in Christ. Hereat Agrippa replied, that he had almost persuaded him to embrace the Christian faith; to which the apostle returned, that he heartily prayed that not only he but the whole auditory were, not only in some measure, but altogether, though not prisoners, yet as much Christians as he himself was. This done, the king, and the governor, and the rest of the council withdrew awhile, to confer privately about this matter; and finding, by the accusations brought against him, that he was not guilty by the Roman laws of any capital offence, no, nor of any that deserved so much as imprisonment, Agrippa told Festus that he might have been released if he had not appealed unto Cæsar; for the appeal being once made, the judge had then no power either to absolve or condemn, the cause being entirely reserved to the cognizance of that superior to whom the criminal had appealed.

7. It was now finally resolved that St. Paul should be sent to Rome;<sup>1</sup> in order whereunto he was, with some other prisoners of note, committed to the charge of Julius, commander of a company belonging to the legion of Augustus. Accompanied by St. Luke, Aristarchus, Trophimus, and some others, in September, ann. Chr. 56, or as others, 57, he went on board a ship

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxvii. 1.

of Adramyttium, and sailed to Sidon, where the captain civilly gave the apostle leave to go ashore, to visit his friends and refresh himself: thence to Cyprus, till they came to the Fair-Havens, a place near Myra, a city of Lycia. Here, winter growing on and St. Paul foreseeing it would be a dangerous voyage, persuaded them to put in and winter. But the captain preferring the judgment of the master of the ship, and especially because of the incommodiousness of the harbour, resolved, if possible, to reach Phœnice, a port of Crete, and to winter there. But it was not long before they found themselves disappointed of their hopes; for the calm southerly gale that blew before, suddenly changed into a stormy and blustering north-east wind, which so bore down all before it, that they were forced to let the ship drive at the pleasure of the wind; but as much as might be, to prevent splitting or running aground, they threw out a great part of their lading and the tackle of the ship. Fourteen days they remained in this desperate and uncomfortable condition, neither sun nor stars appearing for a great part of the time: the apostle putting them in mind how ill advised they were in not taking his counsel; howbeit they should be of good cheer, for that that God whom he served and worshipped, had the last night purposely sent an angel from heaven, to let him know, that notwithstanding the present danger they were in, yet that he should be brought safe before Nero; that they should be shipwrecked indeed, and cast upon an island; but that for his sake God had spared all in the ship, not one whereof should perish; and that he did not doubt but that it would accordingly come to pass. On the fourteenth night, upon

sounding, they found themselves nigh some coast; and therefore, to avoid rocks, thought good to come to an anchor, till the morning might give them better information. In the mean time the seamen (who best understood the danger) were preparing to get into the skiff to save themselves; which St. Paul espying, told the captain, that unless they all stayed in the ship none could be safe; whereupon the soldiers cut the ropes, and let the skiff fall off into the sea. Between this and day-break, the apostle advised them to eat and refresh themselves, having all this time kept no ordinary and regular meals, assuring them they should all escape; himself first taking bread, and having blessed God for it before them all, the rest followed his example, and cheerfully fell to their meat; which done, they lightened the ship of what remained, and endeavoured to put into a creek, which they discovered not far off; but falling into a place where two seas met, the forepart of the ship ran aground, while the hinderpart was beaten in pieces with the violence of the waves. Awakened with the danger they were in, the soldiers cried out to kill the prisoners to prevent their escape; which the captain, desirous to save St. Paul, and probably in confidence of what he had told them, refused to do; commanding, that every one should shift for himself: the issue was, that part by swimming, part on planks, part on pieces of the broken ship, they all, to the number of two hundred threescore and sixteen, (the whole number in the ship,) got safe to shore.

8. The island upon which they were cast was Melita,<sup>1</sup> (now Malta,) situate in the Libyan sea,

<sup>1</sup> Acts, xxviii. 1.

between Syracuse and Africa. Here they found civility among barbarians, and the plain acknowledgments of a divine justice written among the naked and untutored notions of men's minds. The people treated them with great humanity, entertaining them with all necessary accommodations: but while St. Paul was throwing sticks upon the fire, a viper dislodged by the heat, came out of the wood, and fastened on his hand. This the people no sooner espied, but presently concluded, that surely he was some notorious murderer, whom though the divine vengeance had suffered to escape the hue-and-cry of the sea, yet had only reserved him for a more public and solemn execution. But when they saw him shake it off into the fire, and not presently swell, and drop down, they changed their opinions, and concluded him to be some god. So easily are light and credulous minds transported from one extreme to another. Not far off lived Publius, a man of great estate and authority, and (as we may probably guess from an inscription found there, and set down by Grotius,<sup>1</sup> wherein the *ΠΡΩΤΟΣ ΜΕΛΙΤΑΙΩΝ* is reckoned amongst the Roman officers) governor of the island: by him they were courteously entertained three days at his own charge; and his father lying at that time sick of a fever and a dysentery, St. Paul went in, and having prayed, and laid his hands upon him, healed him; as he did also many of the inhabitants, who by this miracle were encouraged to bring their diseased to him; whereby great honours were heaped upon him, and both he and his company furnished with provisions necessary for the rest of

<sup>1</sup> Annot. in loc.

their voyage. Nay, Publius himself is said, by some, to have been hereby converted to the faith,<sup>1</sup> and by St. Paul to have been constituted bishop of the island; and that this was he that succeeded St. Denis, the Areopagite, in the see of Athens, and was afterwards crowned with martyrdom.

9. After three months' stay in this island, they went on board the *Castor* and *Pollux*, a ship of Alexandria, bound for Italy. At Syracuse they put in, and stayed three days; thence sailed to Rhegium, and so to Puteoli; where they landed, and finding some Christians there, staid a week with them, and then set forward in their journey to Rome. The Christians at Rome having heard of their arrival, several of them came part of the way to meet them, some as far as the Three Taverns, a place thirty-three miles from Rome, others as far as Appii Forum, fifty-one miles distant thence. Great was their mutual salutation, and the encouragement which the apostle received by it; glad, no doubt, to see that Christians found so much liberty at Rome. By them he was conducted in a kind of triumph into the city; where, when they were arrived, the rest of the prisoners were delivered over to the captain of the guard, and by him disposed in the common jail, while St. Paul (probably at Julius's request and recommendation) was permitted to stay in a private house, only with a soldier to secure and guard him.

<sup>1</sup> Bar. ad Ann. LVIII. n. 173, vid. Adon. martyr. ad xii. Kal. Febr. Martyr. Rom. ad diem 21 Jan. Euseb. lib. iv. c. 23, p. 143.



## SECTION VII.

*St. Paul's acts, from his coming to Rome till his martyrdom.*

THE first thing St. Paul did after he came to Rome, was to summon the heads of the Jewish consistory there, whom he acquainted with the cause and manner of his coming : that though he had been guilty of no violation of the law of their religion, yet had he been delivered by the Jews into the hands of the Roman governors; who would have acquitted him once and again, as innocent of any capital offence, but by the perverseness of the Jews he was forced, not with an intention to charge his own nation, (already sufficiently odious to the Romans,) but only to vindicate and clear himself, to make his appeal to Cæsar; that being come, he had sent for them, to let them know that it was for his constant asserting the resurrection, the hope of all true Israelites, that he was bound with that chain which they saw upon him. The Jews replied, that they had received no advice concerning him, nor had any of the nation that came from Judæa, brought any charge against him : only for the religion which he had espoused, they desired to be a little better informed about it, it being every where decried, both by Jew and Gentile. Accordingly, upon a day appointed, he discoursed to them from morning to night, concerning the religion and doctrine of the holy Jesus, proving from the promises and predictions of the Old Testament, that he was

the true Messiah. His discourse succeeded not with all alike, some being convinced, others persisted in their infidelity; and as they were departing in some discontent at each other, the apostle told them, it was now too plain, God had accomplished upon them the prophetic curse, of being left to their own wilful hardness and impenitency, to be blind at noon-day, and to run themselves against all means and methods into irrecoverable ruin; that since the case was thus with them, they must expect, that henceforth he should turn his preaching to the Gentiles, who would be most ready to entertain what they had so scornfully rejected, the glad tidings of the gospel.<sup>1</sup>

2. It was not, probably, long after this, that he was brought to his first hearing before the emperor, where those friends whom he most expected should stand by him, plainly deserted him: afraid it seems of appearing in so ticklish a cause before so unreasonable a judge, who governed himself by no other measures than the brutish and extravagant pleasure of his lust or humour. But God stood by him, and encouraged him; as indeed divine consolations are many times then nearest to us, when human assistances are furthest from us. This cowardice of theirs the apostle had a charity large enough to cover, heartily praying, that it might not be brought against them in the accounts of the great day.<sup>2</sup> Two years he dwelt at Rome in a house which he hired for his own use, wherein he constantly em-

<sup>1</sup> It is a remarkable fact, that the prejudices which prevailed among the Jews in their own country, should have thus infected them even in the midst of a highly free and cultivated people.  
—ED.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 16.

ployed himself in preaching and writing for the good of the church. He preached daily, without interruption, to all that came to him, and with good success; yea, even upon some of the better rank and quality, and those belonging to the court itself. Among which, the Roman martyrology<sup>1</sup> reckons Torpes, an officer of prime note in Nero's palace, and afterwards a martyr for the faith; and Chrysostom (if Baronius<sup>2</sup> cites him right) tells us of Nero's cupbearer, and one of his concubines, supposed by some to have been Poppæa Sabina, of whom Tacitus<sup>3</sup> gives this character, that she wanted nothing to render her one of the most accomplished ladies in the world, but a chaste and a virtuous mind; and I know not how far it may seem to countenance her conversion, at least inclination to a better religion than that of paganism, that Josephus<sup>4</sup> styles her a pious woman, and tells us that she effectually solicited the cause of the Jews with her husband, Nero; and what favours Josephus himself received from her at Rome, he relates in his own life.

3. Amongst other of our apostle's converts at Rome was Onesimus, who had formerly been servant to Philemon, a person of eminency in Colosse; but had run away from his master, and taken things of some value with him. Having rambled as far as Rome, he was now converted by St. Paul, and by him returned with recommendatory letters to Philemon, his master, to beg his pardon, and that he

<sup>1</sup> Ad diem. XVII. Maii. p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> Ad An. 59, n. 9, vid. Chrysost. adv. vituper. vit. monast. lib. i. c. 4, p. 361, tom. iv.

<sup>3</sup> Annal. lib. xiii. c. 45, p. 263.

<sup>4</sup> Antiq. Jud. lib. xx. cap. 7, p. 697; de vit. sua, p. 999.

might be received into favour, being now of a much better temper, more faithful and diligent, and useful to his master than he had been before; as indeed Christianity, where it is heartily entertained, makes men good in all relations; no laws being so wisely contrived for the peace and happiness of the world, as the laws of the gospel, as may appear by this particular case of servants: what admirable rules, what severe laws does it lay upon them for the discharge of their duties! It commands them to honour their masters as their superiors, and to take heed of making their authority light and cheap, by familiar and contemptible thoughts and carriages, to obey them in all honest and lawful things, and that 'not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as unto God;' that they be faithful to the trust committed to them, and manage their master's interest with as much care and conscience as if it were their own; that they entertain their reproofs, counsels, corrections with all silence and sobriety, not returning any rude, surly answers; and this carriage to be observed, not only to masters of a mild and gentle, but of a cross and peevish disposition; that 'whatever they do, they do it heartily, not as to men only, but to the Lord; knowing that of the Lord they shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for that they serve the Lord Christ.' Imbued with these excellent principles, Onesimus is again returned unto his master; for Christian religion, though it improves men's tempers, does not cancel their relations; it teaches them to abide in their callings, and 'not to despise their masters, because they are brethren, but rather do them service because they are faithful.' And being thus improved, St. Paul the more

confidently begged his pardon. And, indeed, had not Philemon been a Christian, and by the principles of his religion, both disposed and obliged to mildness and mercy, there had been great reason why St. Paul should be thus importunate with him for Onesimus's pardon; the case of servants in those days being very hard, for all masters were looked upon as having an unlimited power over their servants, and that not only by the Roman,<sup>1</sup> but by the laws of all nations; whereby, without asking the magistrate's leave, or any public and formal trial, they might adjudge and condemn them to what work or punishment they pleased, even to the taking away of life itself. But the severity and exorbitancy of this power was afterwards somewhat curbed by the laws of succeeding emperors, especially after the empire submitted itself to Christianity, which makes better provision for persons in that capacity and relation; and in case of unjust and over-rigorous usage, enables them to appeal to a more righteous and impartial tribunal, where master and servant shall both stand upon even ground; 'where he that doth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons.'

4. The Christians at Philippi having heard of St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, and not knowing what straits he might be reduced to, raised a contribution for him, and sent it by Epaphroditus, their bishop, who was now come to Rome, where he shortly after fell dangerously sick: but being recovered, and upon the point to return, by him

<sup>1</sup> L. 1 et 2, ff. de his, qui sui vel alieni juris sunt, lib. 1, tit. 6, vid. Instit. lib. i. tit. 8.

St. Paul sent his epistle to the Philippians, wherein he gives them some account of the state of affairs at Rome, gratefully acknowledges their kindness to him, and warns them of those dangerous opinions which the Judaizing teachers began to vent among them. The apostle had heretofore, for some years, lived at Ephesus, and perfectly understood the state and condition of that place ; and therefore now, by Tychicus, writes his epistle to the Ephesians, endeavouring to countermine the principles and practices both of Jews and Gentiles, to confirm them in the belief and obedience of the Christian doctrine, to represent the infinite riches of the divine goodness in admitting the Gentile world to the unsearchable treasures of Christianity, especially pressing them to express the life and spirit of it in the general duties of religion, and in the duties of their particular relations. Much about the same time, or a little after, he wrote his epistle to the Colossians, among whom he had never been, and sent it by Epaphras, who for some time had been his fellow-prisoner at Rome. The design of it is, for the greatest part, the same with that to the Ephesians, to settle and confirm them in the faith of the Gospel, against the errors both of Judaism, and the superstitious observances of the heathen world, some whereof had taken root amongst them.

5. It is not improbable but that about this, or rather some considerable time before, St. Paul wrote his second epistle to Timothy. I know Eusebius, and the ancients, and most moderns after them, will have it written a little before his martyrdom ; induced thereunto by that passage in it, that he was then 'ready to be offered, and that the time of his departure was at hand.' But surely it

is most reasonable to think, that it was written at his first being at Rome, and that at his first coming thither, presently after his trial before Nero. Accordingly, the passage before mentioned may import no more, than that he was in imminent danger of his life, and had received the sentence of death in himself, not hoping to escape out of the paws of Nero; but that 'God had delivered him out of the mouth of the lion,' i. e. the great danger he was in at his coming thither: which exactly agrees to his case at his first being at Rome, but cannot be reconciled with his last coming thither; together with many more circumstances in this epistle, which render it next door to certain. In it he appoints Timothy shortly to come to him, who accordingly came, and whose name is joined together with his in the front of several epistles to the Philippians, Colossians, and to Philemon. The only thing that can be levelled against this is, that in his epistle to Timothy, he tells him, that he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus, by whom it is plain that the epistles to the Ephesians and Philippians were dispatched; and that therefore this to Timothy must be written after them. But I see no inconvenience to affirm, that Tychicus might come to Rome presently after St. Paul's arrival there; might be by him immediately sent back to Ephesus upon some emergent affair of that church; and after his return to Rome be sent with those two epistles. The design of the epistle was to excite the holy man to a mighty zeal and diligence, care, and fidelity in his office, and to antidote the people against those poisonous principles that in those parts especially began to debauch the minds of men.

6. As for the epistle to the Hebrews, it is very

uncertain when, or whence, and (for some ages doubted) by whom it was written. Eusebius tells us,<sup>1</sup> it was not received by many, because rejected by the church of Rome, as none of St. Paul's genuine epistles. Origen<sup>2</sup> affirms the style and phrase of it to be more fine and elegant, and to contain in it a rich vein of purer Greek than is usually found in St. Paul's epistles; as every one that is able to judge of a style, must needs confess; that the sentences indeed are grave and weighty, and such as breathe the spirit and majesty of an apostle; that therefore it was his judgment that the matter contained in it had been dictated by some apostle; but that it had been put into phrase, form, and order by some other person that did attend upon him; that if any church owned it for St. Paul's, they were not to be condemned, it not being without reason by the ancients ascribed to him; though God only knew who was the true author of it. He further tells us, that report had handed it down to his time, that it had been composed partly by Clemens of Rome, partly by Luke the evangelist. Tertullian adds,<sup>3</sup> that it was writ by Barnabas. What seems most likely in such variety of opinions is, that St. Paul originally wrote it in Hebrew; it being to be sent to the Jews, his countrymen, and by some other person, probably St. Luke, or Clemens Romanus, translated into Greek; especially since both Eusebius<sup>4</sup> and St. Jerome<sup>5</sup> observed of old such a great affinity both in style and

<sup>1</sup> Lib. iii. c. 3. p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Apud Euseb. lib. vi. c. 25, p. 227.

<sup>3</sup> De Pudic. c. 20, p. 582, Vid. Clem. Alex. in lib. Hyp. apud Euseb. lib. vi. c. 14, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> Euseb. lib. iii. c. 38, p. 110.

<sup>5</sup> Hier. de Scrip. Eccl. in Clem.



sense between this and Clemens's 'epistle to the Corinthians, as thence positively to conclude him to be the translator of it. It was written, as we may conjecture, a little after he was restored to his liberty, and probably while he was yet in some parts of Italy, whence he dates his salutations.<sup>1</sup> The main design of it is to magnify Christ and the religion of the gospel, above Moses and the Jewish economy and ministration; that by this means he might the better establish and confirm the convert Jews in the firm belief and profession of Christianity, notwithstanding those sufferings and persecutions that came upon them; endeavouring throughout to arm and fortify them against apostacy from that noble and excellent religion wherein they had so happily engaged themselves. And great need there was for the apostle severely to urge them to it; heavy persecutions, both from Jews and Gentiles, pressing in upon them on every side, besides those trains of specious and plausible insinuations that were laid to reduce them to their ancient institutions. Hence, the apostle calls apostacy 'the sin which did so easily beset them,'<sup>2</sup> to which there were such frequent temptations, and into which they were so prone to be betrayed in those suffering times. And the more to deter them from it, he once and again sets before them the dreadful state and condition of apostates; those who have been 'once enlightened,'<sup>3</sup> and baptized into the Christian faith, 'tasted' the promises of the gospel, and been 'made partakers' of the miraculous gifts of the 'Holy Ghost,' those 'powers' which in the 'world

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xiii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Cap. xii. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Cap. vi. 4, 5, 6.

to come,' or this new state of things, were to be conferred upon the church; if after all this, 'these men fall away,' and renounce Christianity, it is very hard, and even 'impossible to renew them again unto repentance.' For by this means 'they trod under foot,' and 'crucified the Son of God afresh,' and put him to an open shame,' profaned 'the blood of the covenant,' and 'did despite to the spirit of grace.' So, that 'to sin' thus 'wilfully after they had received the knowledge of the truth, theré could 'remain' for them 'no more sacrifice for sins;' nothing 'but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which should devour' these 'adversaries.' And 'a fearful thing it was,' in such circumstances, 'to fall into the hands of the living God;'<sup>1</sup> who had particularly said of this sort of sinners, that 'if any man drew back, his soul should have no pleasure in him.' Hence it is, that every where in this epistle he mixes exhortations to this purpose, that 'they would give earnest heed to the things which they had heard, lest at any time they should let them slip;' that 'they would hold fast the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end,' and 'beware, lest by an evil heart of unbelief they departed from the living God;' that they would 'labour to enter into his rest, lest any man fall after the example of unbelief; that leaving the' first 'principles of the doctrine of Christ, they would go on to perfection, showing diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end; not being slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises;' that they would 'hold fast the profes-

<sup>1</sup> Cap. x. 26—31.

sion of the faith without wavering, not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, (as the manner of some was,) nor 'cast away their confidence, which had great recompence of reward;' that 'they had need of patience, that after they had done the will of God, they might receive the promise;' that they 'would not be of them who drew back unto perdition, but of them that believed to the saving of the soul;' that 'being encompassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses,' who with the most unconquerable constancy and resolution had all holden on in the way to heaven, 'they would lay aside every weight, and the sin which did so easily beset them, and run with patience the race that was set before them;' especially 'looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, who endured the cross, and despised the shame;' that therefore 'they should consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest they should be wearied and faint in their minds;' for that 'they had not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin; looking diligently, lest any man should fail of the grace of God, lest any root of bitterness springing up should trouble them, and thereby many be defiled.' By all which, and much more that might be observed to this purpose, it is evident what our apostle's great design was in this excellent epistle.

7. Our apostle being now, after two years' custody, perfectly restored to liberty, remembered that he was the apostle of the Gentiles, and had therefore a larger diocess than Rome, and accordingly prepared himself for a greater circuit, though which way he directed his course is not absolutely

certain. By some he is said to have returned back into Greece, and the parts of Asia, upon no other ground that I know of, than a few intimations in some of his epistles that he intended to do so. By others he is thought to have preached both in the eastern and western parts, which is not inconsistent with the time he had after his departure from Rome. But of the latter we have better evidence. Sure I am, an author beyond all exception, St. Paul's contemporary and fellow-labourer, I mean Clemens,<sup>1</sup> in his famous epistle to the Corinthians, expressly tells us, that being a preacher both in the east and west, he taught righteousness to the whole world, and went to the utmost bounds of the west: which makes me the more wonder at the confidence of one (otherwise a man of great parts and learning) who so peremptorily denies that ever our apostle preached in the west, merely because there are no monuments left in primitive antiquity of any particular churches there founded by him;<sup>2</sup> as if all the particular passages of his life, done at so vast a distance, must needs have been recorded, or those records have come down to us, when it is so notoriously known, that almost all the writings and monuments of those first ages of Christianity are long since perished; or as if we were not sufficiently assured of the thing in general, though not of what particulars he did there. Probable it is, that he went into Spain, a thing which himself tells us he had formerly once

<sup>1</sup> Κῆρυξ γινόμενος ἐν τῇ ἀνατολῇ καὶ ἐν τῇ δύσει, δικαιοσύνην διδάσας ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως ἐλθών.—Ep. ad Cor. p. 8.

<sup>2</sup> L. Cappel. Append. ad Hist. App. p. 33.

and again resolved on.<sup>1</sup> Certain it is, that the ancients do generally assert it, without seeming in the least to doubt of it.<sup>2</sup> Theodoret and others tell us, that he preached not only in Spain, but that he went to other nations, and brought the gospel into the isles of the sea, by which he undoubtedly means Britain; and therefore elsewhere reckons the Gauls and Britons among the nations which the apostles, and particularly the tent-maker, persuaded to embrace the law of Christ. Nor is he the only man that has said it,<sup>3</sup> others having given in their testimony and suffrage in this case.<sup>4</sup>

8. To what other parts of the world St. Paul preached the gospel, we find no certain footsteps in antiquity, nor any further mention of him till his return to Rome, which probably was about the eighth or ninth year of Nero's reign. Here he met with Peter, and was, together with him, thrown into prison; no doubt in the general persecution raised against the Christians, under the pretence that they had fired the city. Besides the general, we may reasonably suppose there were particular causes of his imprisonment. Some of the ancients

<sup>1</sup> Rom. xv. 24—28.

<sup>2</sup> Epiphan. Hæres. 27, p. 51; Chrysost. de Laud. Paul. p. 536, tom. v. Cyril. Catech. 17, p. 457; Theod. in 2 Tim. iv. 16, et in Psalm cxvi. id. de cur. Græc. Affect. Serm. 9, p. 125; Athan. Epist. ad Dracont. p. 737.

Sophron. Serm. de Natali App.

“Transit et Oceanum, vel quâ facit insula portum,  
Quasque Britannus habet terras, atque ultima Thule.”

Venant. Fortun. de vit. Martin. lib. iii. non procul à fine

<sup>4</sup> It is on an expression in the epistle of Clemens Romanus to the Corinthians, that the opinion respecting Paul's journey into Spain chiefly rests. Clemens says, that “he came to the borders of the west;” but it is argued on the other side, that Rome or Italy only was intended by this expression.—ED.

make him engaged with Peter in procuring the fall of Simon Magus, and that that derived the emperor's fury and rage upon him. St. Chrysostom gives us this account;<sup>1</sup> that having converted one of Nero's concubines, a woman of whom he was infinitely fond, and reduced her to a life of great strictness and chastity, so that now she wholly refused to comply with his wanton and impure embraces; the emperor stormed thereat, calling the apostle a villain and imposter, a wretched perverter and debaucher of others, giving order that he should be cast into prison; and when he still persisted in persuading the lady to continue her chaste and pious resolutions, commanding him to be put to death.

9. How long he remained in prison is not certainly known: at last his execution was resolved on;<sup>2</sup> what his preparatory treatment was, whether scourged as malefactors were wont to be in order to their death, we find not. As a Roman citizen by the Valerian and the Porcian law, he was exempted from it; though by the law of the twelve tables notorious malefactors, condemned by the centuriate assemblies, were first to be scourged, and then put to death; and Baronius tells us, that in the church of St. Mary, beyond the bridge of Rome, the pillars are yet extant, to which both Peter and Paul are said to have been bound and scourged.<sup>3</sup> As he was led to execution, he is said to have converted three of the soldiers that were sent to conduct and guard him, who within few days after, by the emperor's command, became martyrs for the faith.

<sup>1</sup> Adv. vit. Monast. vituperat. lib. i. c. 4, p. 361, tom. iv.

<sup>2</sup> That is, about the year 64 or 65.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> Ad. An. 69, n. 8.

Being come to the place, which was the Aquæ Salviæ, three miles from Rome, after some solemn preparation, he cheerfully gave his neck to the fatal stroke. As a Roman he might not be put upon the cross, too infamous a death for any but the worst of slaves and malefactors, and therefore was beheaded; accounted a more noble kind of death, not among the Romans only,<sup>1</sup> but among other nations, as being fitter for persons of better quality, and more ingenuous education: and from this instrument of his execution the custom, no doubt, first arose, that in all pictures and images of this apostle, he is constantly represented with a sword in his right hand. Tradition reports (justified herein by the suffrage of many of the fathers<sup>2</sup>) that when he was beheaded, a liquor more like milk than blood flowed from his veins, and spirted upon the clothes of his executioner; and had I list or leisure for such things, I might entertain the reader with little glosses that are made upon it. St. Chrysostom adds, that it became a means of converting his executioner, and many more to the faith; and that the apostle suffered in the sixty-eighth year of his age. Some question there is, whether he suffered at the same time with Peter; many of the ancients positively affirm, that both suffered on the same day and year;<sup>3</sup> others, though

<sup>1</sup> Κλέαρχος ἢ οἱ ἄλλοι στρατηγοὶ ἀποτμηθέντες τὰς κεφαλὰς, ὅσπερ κάλλιτος θανάτων ἐδόκει εἶναι.—Xenoph. de Exped. Cyri. lib. ii. in fin. p. 293. "Servi sunt in crucem sublatis, militibus cervices abscissæ."—Hist. de Bell. Hispan. p. 460.

<sup>2</sup> Ambr. de nat. Petr. et Paul. Serm. 68, p. 294, tom. iii. Chrys. Serm. in Petr. et Paul. tom. vi. p. 267.

<sup>3</sup> Dion. Corinth. ap. Euseb. lib. ii. c. 25, p. 68; Ambr. ib. Serm. 66, p. 291; Max. Taur. Hom. 5, de Petr. et Paul. p. 231.

allowing the same day, tell us that St. Paul suffered not till the year after; nay, some interpose the distance of several years.<sup>1</sup> A manuscript writer of the lives and travels of Peter and Paul,<sup>2</sup> brought amongst other venerable monuments of antiquity out of Greece, will have Paul to have suffered no less than five years after Peter, which he justifies by the authority of no less than Justin Martyr and Irenæus. But what credit is to be given to this nameless author, I see not; and therefore lay no weight upon it, nor think it fit to be put into the balance with the testimonies of the ancients. Certainly if he suffered not at the very same time with Peter, it could not be long after, not above a year at most. The best is, which of them soever started first, they both came at last to the same end of the race; to those palms and crowns which are reserved for all good men in heaven, but most eminently for the martyrs of the Christian faith.

10. He was buried in the Via Ostiensis, about two miles from Rome, over whose grave, about the year 318, Constantine the Great,<sup>3</sup> at the instance of pope Sylvester, built a stately church, within a

<sup>1</sup> Prudent. Peristeph. in Pass. Petr. et Paul. Hymn. 12, p. 518; Arat. Act. App. lib. ii. in fin. p. 700; Aug. de Sanct. Serm. 28, tom. x.; Col. 1225, Greg. Turon. de glor. Martyr. lib. i. c. 29, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> Λέγουσι δὲ τινες προλαβεῖν τὸν Πέτρον ἐνιαυτὸν ἓνα, καὶ τὸν μακάριον ἐκεῖνο δέξασθαι καὶ δεσποτικὸν πάθος, τὴν ψυχὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν προβάτων προθέμενον· ἀκολεθῆσαι δὲ τεττῶ τὸν μέγαν Ἀπόστολον Παῦλον, ὡς Ἰησοῦς καὶ Εἰρηναῖος φασὶν ἐφ' ὅλοις ἔτεσι πεντε· Καί γε τέτοις ἐγὼ πείθομαι μᾶλλον.—Apud P. Jun. not. in Clem. Ep. ad Cor. ad p. 8, forsā ex S. Metaphr. qui totidem verbis eadem habet ap. Sur. ad 29 Jun. n. 23, p. 357.

<sup>3</sup> Damas. Pont. in vit. Sylvestr. vid. Onuphr. de 7, Urb. Basil. p. 87.



farm which Lucina, a noble Christian matron of Rome, had long before settled upon that church. He adorned it with a hundred of the best marble columns, and beautified it with the most exquisite workmanship; the many rich gifts and endowments which he bestowed upon it, being particularly set down in the life of Sylvester. This church, as too narrow and little for the honour of so great an apostle, Valentinian, or rather Theodosius the emperor, (the one but finishing what the other began,) by a rescript<sup>1</sup> directed to Sallustius, prefect of the city, caused to be taken down, and a larger and more noble church to be built in the room of it: further beautified (as appears from an ancient inscription<sup>2</sup>) by Placidia the empress, at the persuasion of Leo, bishop of Rome. What other additions of wealth, honour, or stateliness, it has received since, concerns not me to inquire.

<sup>1</sup> Apud Bar. ad An. 385, p. 527, ex Cod. Vatic.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. in Addend. ad tom. iv. p. 12.

END OF VOL. I.

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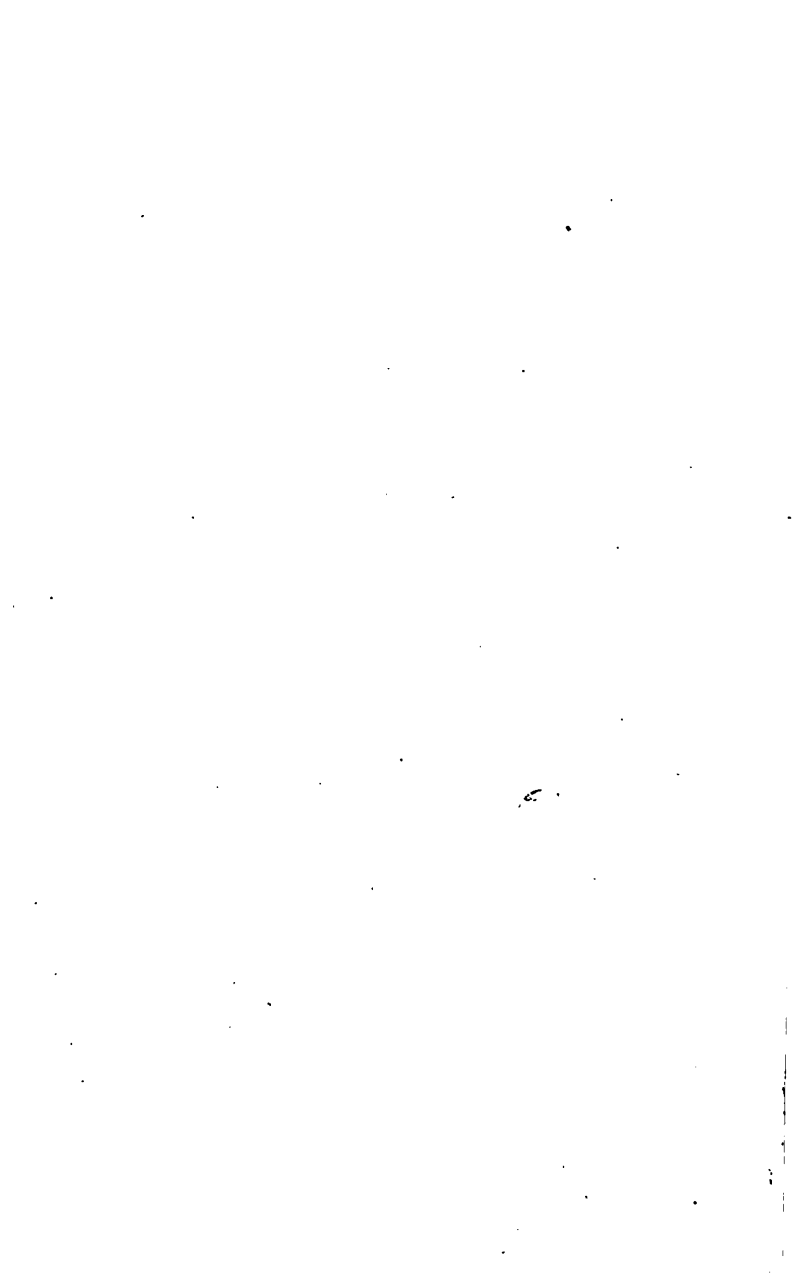
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